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## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I must start with an apology that this thesis does not include a first hand account of the present view of those other leaders principally concerned in the formation and birth of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Circumstances beyond my control, both political and economic, have made it impossible for me to journey to the various West African countries to interview them. I have, however, had access to a considerable number of documents, having been partly responsible myself for the formulation of most of them. I have also requested and obtained copies of correspondence, minutes of confidential discussions and written briefs concerning ECOWAS from a number of the main participants, which it is hoped will contribute to existing knowledge about the history and creation of the West African Community. I have used such documents and have acknowledged the relevant source.

Fortunately, the subject being a contemporary one, and topical, has been reasonably well reported in the principal newspapers and journals, such as West Africa, Africa, Africa Confidential, Jeune Afrique, and other reputable sources of information about Africa. Well informed articles have also appeared at various times in the major international newspapers concerning West Africa in general and ECOWAS and the various sub-regional groupings in particular, e.g. The Times (London), The Financial Times, The Guardian, Le Monde etc. Recent publications, by Nigerian and other academics, have also been very useful and will receive due recognition wherever appropriate.

Because of events in Nigeria following my departure for the OAU Summit in Kampala, Uganda, on July 27, 1972, I was not able to return home and did not therefore have access to most of my notes and other source materials relating to ECOWAS. For much of the period until 1975 I have had to rely on memory and whatever documents and sources were at hand. Fortunately, however, I had been party to most of the early discussions preceding the formation of ECOWAS. I was also able to act as host to the West African leaders at the Lagos Summit of May 1975 when the decision was taken to establish the community. It was a privilege in this enterprise to be closely associated with my brother and colleague, General Gnassingbe Eyadema, President of the Republic of Togo, as our two governments collaborated to shape the strategy that finally brought ECOWAS into being. Together we sought and obtained the support and cooperation of our other colleagues in this regional endeavour.

My thesis attempts to provide a detailed account of this effort at regional integration in West Africa which, with the benefit of hindsight, was both a political and socio-economic coup - in a region renowned for its differences and divisions and more frequently associated, until 1975, with disintegration. Where our experience seems to have differed from that of

other regional and sub-regional communities I have tried to analyse some of the features that have made ECOWAS unique in this area. I must warn the reader, however, that it is a subject to which I have long been committed - even at the expense of my personal interest and welfare - and a subject in which I have retained a lively interest despite being cut off from any direct contact with or participation in ECOWAS after July 1975.

On several occasions since quitting the political scene I have pleaded with former colleagues, Heads of State and Government, not to allow our previous personal relations and my sudden removal to any way jeopardise the present and future success of ECOWAS. I would rather our personal relationship was put into 'deep-freeze' so as to permit the new-found relationship between Nigeria and our West African partners to continue to develop for the mutual benefit of all. Our aim was a new political and economic order in the region that would one day usher in an era of political, social and economic justice for all our peoples and that would be an example for the other regions in Africa and for developing countries elsewhere in the world.

ECOWAS offers the student of politics the opportunity of studying at close quarters the political and economic problems that confront at least some of the developing countries and of the factors that led the West African government to conclude that they might best be tackled and eventually overcome by means of regional economic integration. First, however, I must acknowledge my indebtedness to various people who have in one way or another assisted me with my work. Without their help, I would not have been able to complete the task. If, by misadventure, I have omitted any particular individual or group of people I tender my sincere apologies and hope I can remedy the oversight at some later opportunity.

I am particularly grateful to President Alhaji Shehu Shagari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for making available to me in 1982 a substantial number of confidential papers and documents from Nigeria relating to ECOWAS, which enabled me to complete the present work. After the initial anxiety about obtaining original sources of information, the President's directive that these invaluable materials should be forwarded to me was of the greatest help and is most appreciated. To his staff, to the Foreign Minister, Dr. (Professor) I.S.Audu, and to Alhaji U.Shinkafi, Alhaji M.Atta, Mr.Shinkaye and Mr.Baiye (formerly my excellent French interpreter), my grateful thanks for ensuring that the papers and documents were collected, photocopied and despatched to me without delay. To Dr.Lewu, the Councillor (Economics) at the Nigerian High Commission, my special thanks for agreeing to proof-read my work and for providing valuable advice and suggestions.

From the Republic of Togo I received a number of other documents and papers relating to ECOWAS, for some time my only direct contact with ECOWAS and its development was through Togo. For this I am indebted to

President Gnassingbe Eyadema, President of the Republic of Togo, for his kindness and consideration in ensuring that I received whatever documents considered necessary for my work on ECOWAS. His Ambassador in the UK, H.E.Mr. Ayivi-Ajevon (now Minister of Justice) was most kind and helpful. He ensured constant contact between me and the President of Togo on my work and other matters. Their friendship was a source of strength.

I was amazed at the interest shown by various people, Nigerians and non-Nigerians, as well as West Africans and several non-West Africans, in the work I was undertaking and offered to get or obtain essential papers, information and documents that I may require. Special Mention must be made of H.E. Mr. Moses Ihonde, who was at one time my Press Secretary, now Nigerian Consul in Atlanta, Georgia. He was able to make available to me minutes of my various discussions with visiting Heads of State, envoys or emissaries, particularly those dealing with ECOWAS matters. The details as well as the exact dates, time and place of events were most invaluable to get my record right. Mr. Dan Ogona, a family friend who personally called at the ECOWAS Headquarters in Lagos to collect some documents and ECOWAS publications for me. My very good and old school-friend Mallam Hamza Zayyad was able to obtain some ECOWAS study papers from a former Nigerian Minister of Economic Development and Reconstruction, Alhaji Muttalab. I am grateful to the ex-minister for releasing those papers for my use. Mr. Solomon Asemota, my legal adviser was most helpful in obtaining some of the essential papers and documents needed.

From the academic world outside the University of Warwick, I am indebted to Mr. Martin Dent of Keele University for his constant discourse on ECOWAS and other African and Nigerian problems, whose arrangements for me to give papers on ECOWAS to the Postgraduate and International Studies Group at Keele University greatly assisted my work on ECOWAS. My thanks also go to Professor James O'Connell of the Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford, whose constant advice and encouragement, as in the past helped me immensely.

From the USA to Miss Jean Herskovits of The State University of New York at Purchase, for her advice and suggestions as well as for her lucid papers on Nigerian and ECOWAS matters prepared for the US State Department, and to Professor Ali Mazrui of the University of Michigan (USA) and of the University of Jos (Nigeria) for his constant support and encouragement

From Nigeria, my thanks go to Dr. Jonah Isawa Elaigwu for his staunch support for, and defence of, my policies when in Government. I value his helpful criticism on ECOWAS, his ideas and suggestions on how to improve it. To my old Wusasa school mates and colleagues, Dr. (Professor) Adamu Baikie (Vice-Chancellor of Benin University), Mr. Michael Angulu (of JAMB), my thanks for their constant support and encouragement. As for my many Barewa College old colleagues, Mr. Sunday Awoniyi, Alhaji Muhamed Saidu Gwarzo, Sule Kuffi, Imrana Yazidu Kafisina, etc., I thank them all for their encouragement and good wishes during my work on ECOWAS.

I believe it is most appropriate that I acknowledge here the invaluable contributions of all those Nigerian public servants who were involved with me in working for ECOWAS without whose support, hard work, dedication and vision, ECOWAS might not have seen the light of day, and as for the Nigerian people in general, my grateful thanks for backing me to the hilt to go ahead with the establishment of ECOWAS for the good, not only of West Africa alone, but of Africa as a whole.

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I must also thank the Secretariat of ECOWAS in Lagos for ensuring that their various publications and reports were made available for my work. Their studies of various West African problems and suggested solutions to them have been most useful for my work. Their information series - Official Journal of ECOWAS is a very useful source of information about details of ECOWAS decisions both at Authority and Ministerial level.

The University of Warwick deserves my unmitigated thanks and gratitude. I am grateful to all the staff - academic and administrative, and students for making it possible for me to integrate so well and so quickly.

My first and major thanks goes to my tutor, Dr. Ian Campbell, whose tutorship and guidance saw me through my work. He has been most understanding, sympathetic and helpful. My thanks also go to my Heads of Department, past and present - Professors Malcolm Anderson and Jack Lively for their interest in my welfare and work. I value their understanding and encouragement most sincerely. To all the staff in the Departments of Politics and International Studies, my sincere appreciation for their support and encouragement, especially those who taught me and helped me throughout my undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

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I am very touched by the interest and encouragement that I received from a number of young West African students from various universities, especially those from the University of Warwick. I found that their interest in ECOWAS is a deeply genuine one. They see in it a great future and that they will be its future torch bearers. A number of them are doing various postgraduate work on various aspects of ECOWAS and invariably we meet and discuss at length and in depth the problems and prospects of ECOWAS. It is very refreshing to see how dedicated these young people are about their sub-region. I must mention two in particular, Mr. George Yankey from Ghana and Mr. Hassan Lawal from Nigeria, both of the Law Department, the University of Warwick, and both successful MA graduates of the University. I found their company most rewarding and appreciate all their help and encouragement.

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I would therefore like to dedicate this work to my wife Victoria and the children - Ibrahim, Saratu and Rahila.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific (Nations, Countries or Group).
ADB	African Development Bank
BCEAO	Banque Centrale des Etat de l'Afrique de l'Ouest.
BOAD	Banque Ouest-Africaine de développement.
BWA	British West Africa
CARICOM	Caribbean Community and Common Market
COMECOM	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.
CBLT (LCBC)	Lake Chad Basin Commission
CDEAO (ECOWAS)	Communauté Doua Niere Economique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest.
CEAO (WAEC)	Communaute Economique des Etate de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
CFN (NRC)	Commission du Fleuve Niger (Niger River Commission).
CFA	Communaute Financiere Africaine
CIEC	Conference on International Economic Cooperation.
CILSS	Comite Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte Contre da Secheres dans le Sahel.
EAC	East African Community.
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa.
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (UN)
ECOWAS (CDEAO)	Economic Community of West African States.
ECWA	Economic Commission for Western Asia.
EDF	European Development Fund
EEC	European Economic Community.
ESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific.
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization.
FWA	French West Africa.
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product.
GNP	Gross National Product.

ABBREVIATIONS cont.

IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
IDA	International Development Agency or Association.
IFC	International Finance Dorporation.
IMF	International Monetary Fund.
ITU	International Telecommunication Union.
OAU (OUA)	Organization of African Unity.
OCAM	Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache/Mauricienne
OCLALAV	Organisation Commune de Lutte Antiacredienne et de Lutte anti aviaite.
ODA	Official Development Assistance.
OERS	Organisation des Etats Riverains du Senegal.
OMVS	Organisation pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Senegal.
ODEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.
ROSTS	Regular Officers Special Training School.
STABEY	Stabilization Fund.
UAM	Union Africaine et Malgache
UAMCE	Union Africaine et Malgache de Cooperation Economique.
UDAO	Union Douaniere des Etats de l'Afrique Occidentale.
UDEAC	Union Douaniere des Etats de l'Afrique Central
UDEAO	Union Douaniere des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest.
UMOA	Union Monetaire Ouest-Africaine.
UN (O)	United Nations (Organization).
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme.
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund.
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial and Development Organization.

ABBREVIATIONS cont

UNTOC      United Nations Office for Technical Cooperation

UNSO      United Nations Sahelian Office

WACB      West African Currency Board

WAEC      West African Examination Council

WAEC (CEAO)      West African Economic Community.

WARDA      West African Rice Development Association

WACH      West African Clearing House

WHO      World Health Organization



## ABSTRACT

The creation of ECOWAS in May 1975 marked the successful outcome of protracted negotiations that had begun shortly after independence, and which reflected the mounting sense of unease in Africa and throughout the Third World that political independence did not signify effective control by the new states of their economies. Hence the numerous experiments at integration within the region, some mainly political and others more economic in character. All, however, contributed to the movement towards regional economic integration and ECOWAS.

The Ghana-Guinea Union attempted briefly to bridge the unfortunate linguistic and cultural divide separating former British and French territories in West Africa. The Union was restricted, however, to political cooperation between leaders with more or less compatible and radical ideologies, who were a small minority within the region as a whole. With independence the very number and diversity of West African states seemed to dictate a different and more gradual approach to unity based, initially, on economic cooperation and functional inter-dependence, and that has been the policy of every Nigerian government since 1960.

If I have emphasised the role played by Nigeria, particularly after 1970, it is because international agencies and our future partners themselves recognised that, without Nigeria, there could be no effective West African community. By reason of its size, population and oil resources, Nigeria constitutes a core state, with no interest in territorial aggrandisement but concerned, understandably, with its own security and, therefore, with the stability of the region. These objectives are best served by policies of political cooperation, economic integration and adoption of a form of collective self-reliance. Here Nigeria's perception of its development and security needs has coincided increasingly with those of the other states within the region.

Particular attention has been given to the Francophone states, who are the majority within West African and whose changing relationship with the metropole on the one hand, and with Nigeria on the other, is central to our analysis. The promise of the Ghana-Guinea Union was finally realised thanks to the growing cooperation after 1970 between Nigeria and Togo who, together, formed the nucleus of the West African community in 1972. Economic integration in the 'seventies was also facilitated by (a) the reduced importance of ideological differences within the region; (b) the mounting economic difficulties confronting states as a result of the global economic crisis and increased oil prices after 1973, but alleviated by timely Nigerian assistance; (c) the example of regional integration within the EEC, soon to be expanded to include Britain; and (d) the successful outcome in 1975 of the Lome negotiations between the EEC and the African-Pacific-Caribbean states.

The greater part of the thesis is concerned with the formation of ECOWAS and the negotiations, between July 1966 and May 1975, in which I was privileged to participate. While my own association with ECOWAS ended shortly afterwards, in July 1975, there was, fortunately, no such interruption in the development of the community. It seemed appropriate, therefore, to extend the scope of the thesis to encompass the first formative years of the community, 1975-1979, which saw the establishment of the principal ECOWAS institutions, the adoption of the more important protocols, and the first difficult steps towards their implementation.

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PART I

CHAPTER 1REGIONAL INTEGRATION : THEORY AND PRACTICE

Before outlining my own approach to regional economic integration in the latter part of this chapter, it is first necessary to examine some of the terms widely used in the literature relating to economic integration, and then to discuss a number of the more influential views that have been advanced concerning the problems and prospects for regional integration, particularly in the Third World and in Africa.

Concepts and Definitions

Integration has been defined as "the bringing together of parts into a whole." <sup>1/</sup> As such it is likely to have social and political as well as economic dimensions. But, where Gunnar Myrdal uses the term so as to encompass integration within as well as between nations, <sup>2/</sup> others like Balassa, have tried to restrict its usage to the international context, arguing that "in the present-day world, the problems relating to integration on the national and international levels differ to a considerable degree." <sup>3/</sup> For example, whereas the creation of a strong national state would appear to be a major instrument of national economic integration, it might also contribute "to disintegration on the international scene." <sup>4/</sup>

Balassa's distinction between national and international forms of integration, however convenient, seems to be far from absolute since his category of "total economic integration" would surely require the

existence of a super-state, or supra-national authority with commensurate powers, able to enforce conformity throughout the community over the stipulated range of monetary, fiscal and other policies. But then total economic integration is obviously an ideal type of yardstick. However, an effective economic union, which on Balassa's criteria falls short of "total economic integration", would itself demand a degree of centrally coordinated political intervention not far removed from national integration itself.

Here Balassa tries to sustain his argument by making yet another distinction between the minimum conditions for the satisfactory operation of an economic union and the optimal conditions which "will require the suppression of every conceivable form of discrimination between the economic units of the member states and necessitates adopting a supra-national approach that is associated with political unification, possibly in the form of a federation of states." <sup>5/</sup>

There is also the problem of distinguishing between economic cooperation and those activities that can more appropriately be labelled economic integration, although in practice a good deal of overlap between the two would seem to be necessary, desirable - and probably inevitable in the case of functioning regional communities. For Balassa, cooperation describes arrangements whereby economic policies are harmonised and economic discrimination between states is lessened, whereas "the process of economic integration comprises those measures which entail the suppression of some forms of discrimination", or simply "the abolition of discrimination within an area." <sup>6/</sup>

While some such distinction is probably necessary, the view of economic integration presented here seems unduly narrow since, at least in the developing countries, there is much more to integration than the elimination of discrimination within the region - even if the term is construed in its widest possible economic sense. Moreover, the distinction between cooperation and integration, which is meant to give "definite meaning" to the latter term, is far from clear-cut.<sup>7/</sup> It is a distinction neither of kind nor of degree, despite Balassa's claim that the differences are both "qualitative and quantitative."<sup>8/</sup>

We can only conclude that, unlike cooperation, economic integration between states implies not only the existence of agreements that are formal and, presumably, binding, but also the creation of a specialist administration able to guarantee the continuity of the community and to ensure the prompt execution of its joint decisions. Such decisions will involve the removal of existing barriers to trade and the formulation of policies intended to secure the development of the region as a whole and its constituent states.

Balassa also distinguishes between integration as a conscious strategy or "process", on the one hand, and as "a state of affairs" on the other. The latter simply denotes "the absence of various forms of discrimination between national economies",<sup>9/</sup> whereas integration when considered as a process is more concerned with their effective elimination. Even then, however, Balassa has to concede that the mere absence of discrimination would not, of itself, enable us to speak of integration

between economies as remote and apparently unrelated as those of New Zealand and Iceland. <sup>10/</sup> Whether thought of as a process or state of affairs integration surely involves a territorial dimension.

Economic integration among states would seem then to require, if not contiguity, then some degree of territorial proximity, reinforced by a sense of common purpose or predicament, supplemented by a recent history of social and economic exchange. Hence the concept of regional integration that Charles Pentland has defined, admittedly in a European context, as "cooperation and integration among geographically proximate states which share a sense of their own individual inadequacy in dealing with problems of security and welfare." <sup>11/</sup> Such a definition is acceptable for the purposes of this thesis, provided the scope of the union is broadened to include problems not only of security and welfare, but also of development and dependency.

Regional integration is known to encompass a variety of forms, which together seem to occupy a broad continuum ranging from non-integrated, discrete national economies at the one extreme, to "total economic integration" at the other. And associated with this model, employed by Balassa, is a useful, if largely static typology, whereby the different types or manifestations of economic integration are first identified and then located on the continuum according to criteria which also serve to denote the "varying degrees of integration" to be found among them. <sup>12/</sup>

Balassa's "types" include the free trade area, where restrictions on trade have been removed but there is, as yet, no common external tariff; the customs union, where such a tariff exists and is being applied; the common market, which is a functioning customs union, without restrictions on trade or factor movements within the region; and the economic union, where, in addition, there is "some degree of harmonisation of national economic policies." <sup>13/</sup> Total economic integration "presupposes the unification of monetary, fiscal, social and counter-cyclical policies and requires the setting-up of a supra-national authority whose decisions are binding for the member-states." <sup>14/</sup> It remains to be seen, however, whether this last "stage" of economic integration can be reached by any means short of political union.

Indeed, one problem with this typology from our point of view is the almost complete exclusion of political criteria. Integration can also be approached largely from a political perspective which the relevant variable might be the extent to which national sovereignty is surrendered. "It is sometimes suggested that economic integration would pass through three different stages - namely, cooperation, coordination, and full integration - one leading progressively to the other..." But, as H. Kitamura points out, "so far as the process of economic integration is concerned, however, the surrender of national sovereignty is only one of the means to achieve the goal and may not be as important as other means." <sup>15/</sup>

Other writers, more concerned with the relationship between the political and economic aspects of integration, but also aware of the



problems associated with political sovereignty, claim to have identified a more explicit kind of dynamic to be encountered in the integration process. "The theory of economic integration contains in it a certain dynamic logic which underlies a central concept of the neo-functional theory of political integration, the concept of 'spillover'.<sup>16/</sup> Spillover implies that success in one integrated sector will then lead to advances across a much broader front, just as the economic achievements of the European Economic Community have since generated additional pressures for closer and more effective political as well as economic cooperation. "Thus, it is argued, once a form of international integration is established there will always be an inherent tendency to move into a higher form of integration."<sup>17/</sup>

But, as W.A.Axline goes on to point out, the considerations involved in any such interpretation are not purely economic and, as a consequence, "only in theory is this movement monotonic and automatic."<sup>18/</sup> The number of possible variables that can affect the formation and development of a regional community would tend to militate against the imposition of an evolutionary "logic" or acceptance of any deterministic schema. Successful integration would seem to depend not only on the policies pursued and the institutions created, but also on the prevailing economic climate, the state of inter-governmental relations within the region, alternative political and economic strategies available to member states, and the extent to which leaders are prepared and able to surrender control over areas of policy.

It would seem then that, while regional economic integration is only one aspect of economic integration, the economics of regional integration cannot usefully be considered apart from the political and other dimensions of "regionalism" - particularly when we are dealing with countries of the Third World. One has only to consider the fate of the Mali and Malaysian Federations which collapsed in the 'sixties because their constituent units were unable to strike a mutually acceptable balance between their political and economic goals. Senegal and Singapore wanted a closer economic union, but with loose political ties, while Mali and Malaya insisted on a tightly centralised political union as the price for an integrated economic community - and to compensate for their relative economic backwardness.

In so far as new states are even less inclined than older ones to surrender control over any area of national policy, regional communities in the Third World are likely to be based, initially at least, on a sense of shared economic interest or concern with their common financial predicament, while the prospects for wider political union are essentially long term. Nor will economic union proceed any faster than the member states themselves are prepared to sanction.

By the same token, while regional economic integration may contribute, along with other inputs, to help relieve some of the more pressing problems confronting national governments in the Third World, by itself it can achieve little or nothing. "Integration is not a panacea for curing all economic ills, however, and its beneficial effects can follow only if sociological, psychological, and political obstacles to development have been surmounted." 19/

### Regional Economic Integration : Costs and Benefits

Most studies of regional economic integration since World War II have focussed on Western Europe and, in particular, on the creation and development of the European Economic Community (EEC). The formation of the EEC and its undoubted success have inspired other governments to undertake their own experiments in regional integration, just as they have stimulated economists and others to examine more closely the workings of the community and the distribution of costs and benefits among the member states.

The benefits, often difficult to quantify, have included economic reconstruction and a long and continuing period of relatively harmonious cooperation between countries previously in a state of war or international tension for much of the past century. And if member states are still far from the goal of political integration or "total economic union", the success of the economic arrangements to date has generated strong pressures for the harmonisation of community policies on a wide range of other issues. Moreover, the member countries can now command greater international respect and influence than would otherwise have been the case had they remained discrete national units.

What has most impressed governments in the Third World, however, has been the success of the EEC not only in fostering trade among its members, but also in providing a larger market, leading to the more efficient utilisation of existing productive capacity through economies of scale and exploitation by industry of external economies. The community

has certainly stimulated economic growth among its members and has contributed to the expansion of trade, not only within the EEC but also between EEC states and countries outside the union.

One measure of the economic benefits conferred by a customs union on its members, identified by Jacob Viner, is the extent of "trade creation", as distinct from "trade diversion". <sup>20/</sup> The former refers to the replacement of high-cost production of particular commodities by imports from other members of the union with lower production costs. Conversely, trade diversion involves the substitution of high cost products from within the community for comparable goods produced at much lower cost and previously imported from outside.

Free market critics have argued, however, that regional economic integration is destructive of the principle of comparative advantage, based on international specialisation in production. Comparative advantage alone, in their view, can give rise to mutually beneficial commercial exchanges between nations. These exchanges will then generate increased national income and wealth, resulting in a higher level of economic welfare for all states, large or small, developed or developing.

The same critics maintain that regional integration, on the other hand, requires an element of protection which can benefit only a few states - and even then the benefits are likely to be short-lived as rival blocs are soon organised and tariff barriers are raised on all sides.

The result is a sharp contraction in the volume of world trade and reduced levels of national income and the Third World countries will be among the first victims. Regional integration then is not only antagonistic to trade liberalisation and internationalism, but also runs counter to the trend towards growing inter-dependence among nations, especially in the economic sphere and particularly marked since the 'seventies.

It is doubtful, though, whether international free trade would benefit any nations other than those that are already economically powerful and technologically advanced. And it is these nations and their governments that have shown themselves ready and able in the past to shelve the principle of comparative advantage whenever it has suited them to do so. One does not have to subscribe to theories of "dependency" to realise that those who control the means of modern production - capital and technology - have an overwhelming advantage over countries that may possess the raw materials but are not so well endowed in these other respects. International free trade, even if it were feasible, would not enable the weaker countries of the Third World, with their slender capital resources, to reach a higher level of development and welfare - let alone begin to approximate the standards set by the industrial nations.

Governments in the Third World, including those in West Africa, have increasingly come to reject the view that regional or sub-regional organisation constitutes an obstacle to world trade and development, or necessarily entails higher tariff barriers and less efficient exploitation of existing resources. Rather they have come to see regional economic

integration as a practical and, on the whole, a more reliable means of securing improved living standards within the region. The larger market should enable under-developed countries to attract increased investment and on more favourable terms, as well as promoting diversification of their economies and thereby helping relieve the intolerable social and political strains created by economic dependency in the decades after independence. In time separate regional communities may be able to harmonise their policies and enlarge their frontiers, preparing the way for wider economic and social groupings, perhaps continental in scale, with the prospect one day of a new and more equitable world economic order.

Other critics have questioned the relevance of the EEC and its "lessons" for Third World nations bent on securing rapid economic development and greater influence in international councils. They are pessimistic about the likely future of integration schemes among the less developed countries and are frankly sceptical about the benefits to be derived therefrom. Some maintain that successful economic integration is only possible where there are already fully integrated national units, each with a pluralistic social structure.<sup>21/</sup> Others have insisted that national exclusiveness is the characteristic trait of states that are neither industrial, nor urban, nor predominantly modern in outlook.<sup>22/</sup> In either case the assumption is that regional integration can only be effective in advanced Western economies.

Others again, more supportive of regional integration in the Third World, claim that less developed countries can only hope to benefit from economic integration if they are also prepared to surrender much of their political sovereignty and to consent to a large degree of central (or regional) planning and policy coordination. According to A.Segal, the price of integration for Third World countries is a reduced ability to operate as independent nation-states : and this, he concludes, is a price that new states in particular are reluctant to pay. <sup>23/</sup>

A.Hazlewood argues from his examination of the East African Community that "the fundamental difficulty, of course, is the surrender of autonomy which is involved." <sup>24/</sup> The problem is not, however, confined to the Third World. All states have difficulty relinquishing any part of their sovereignty and the problem surely is not insurmountable even for new states. First, these states must be assured of their effective participation in all important decisions to be taken - as is the case with the EEC today - then they must be convinced that the community can and will operate to their joint and individual advantage.

Whatever the benefits of regional economic integration it seems clear from the economic literature that these will not be of the same order for developing countries as the benefits derived by the industrial nations from the EEC. It is argued that the removal of barriers to trade within the regional communities of the Third World will not automatically stimulate commerce and manufacturing where there is little industry to begin with and where the economies are essentially competitive, producing much the same commodities at roughly the same unit cost and for the same European markets. Indeed, a major argument for regional integration

in the Third World is the need to create suitable conditions for economic diversification so that trade can be re-directed away from the former metropolises and to new Third World markets.

For the same reasons, it is said, regional groupings of less developed countries are at first more likely to involve trade diversion than trade creation.<sup>25/</sup> Their purpose is to encourage the development within the region of new industries whose initial production costs will almost certainly exceed those of comparable industries in the advanced industrial nations. Hence, in considering the benefits to be derived from regional integration in less developed countries the relevant criteria are a much larger market with the prospect of more rapid industrialisation and the emergence of "poles of economic growth", economies of scale, trade diversification, long-term input savings, greater monetary stability, increased foreign investment and more effective utilisation of scarce resources, including skilled labour.

Even then writers such as A.Segal and R.Hansen have queried whether the benefits that may be derived from regional integration, and which lie mainly in the future, can ever outweigh the almost certain costs which have to be met here and now.<sup>26/</sup> The benefits from the East African Community were real and tangible, according to Segal, and would have been much greater but for the absence of effective political leadership at the regional level. In developing countries the elimination of tariffs is not, by itself, enough. Trade liberalisation within a community of less developed states will, of itself, have little immediate impact since



commerce remains beset by exchange controls, import and export licensing, quantitative restrictions and complex and expensive transport arrangements. But the point of a regional community is that it should be capable of collective action to help phase out all such obstacles to trade and to secure major improvements in transport, communications and infra-structure.

Another problem common to regional communities in the Third World is largely a product of their very success in attracting investment and stimulating growing economic growth. In a community of industrial nations like the EEC all members may benefit from the customs union but the less developed may benefit disproportionately because of free movement of factors, cheaper labour and lower production costs. These have been labelled the "spread" or "trickle down" effects stemming from economic union. However, in the case of integration among developing states Hansen has criticised what, following Myrdal, he describes as the "backwash" effects of regional integration : that the greater the initial disparities among member states the greater the likelihood that growth and industrialisation will favour the more developed areas at the expense of the remainder. <sup>27/</sup>

In other words, the regional community will soon come to reproduce, in miniature, the divisions already to be found between centre and periphery within the international economy.

#### Regional Integration in the Third World

Such disparities constitute a central theme of W.A.Axline's valuable and provocative commentary on regional integration as it applies

to developing states, and particularly in the Caribbean where he notes that:

...the benefits of economic integration, although increasing the welfare of the union as a whole, do not necessarily benefit each country in the same degree at each stage.

Here, Axline shares the views of others, like Hansen and Hazlewood, who consider that fiscal payments and simple monetary adjustments will not provide adequate compensation for states which are otherwise unable to attract a reasonable share of community investment and of newly created industries. He contends, moreover, that such disparities are likely to become even more marked in those communities still operating at the level of a free trade area and subject to "market forces". Such communities offer few opportunities for trade-offs and side-payments and the prospects for reaching negotiated settlements satisfactory to all "package deals" are very limited.

Which is why he believes that regional integration in the Third World, to be successful, must move quickly to the stage where it can offer not only trade liberalisation and tariff protection, but also measures to harmonise industrial policy throughout the region and to regulate the inflow of foreign investment and the repatriation of profits. Only joint political intervention, he insists, can provide the impetus in these circumstances for closer integration and for effective remedial action to ensure a more balanced and equitable distribution of benefits. The problem then is how best to secure that intervention and the sacrifice of political sovereignty that it entails without provoking the disintegration of the community itself.

There is widespread agreement among commentators that regional communities are likely to be more highly politicised where the countries involved are themselves under-developed. Axline sees such politicisation not only as inevitable but as a major means of overcoming the risks of polarization or "backwash" and avoiding growing divisions within the community. Moreover, under-development, in his view, is a product of international economic forces. Only by close and effective political coordination can Third World countries hope to achieve what he calls "collective self-reliance." He does not, however, underestimate the magnitude of the task and has therefore concentrated on the kind of bargaining strategies that will be needed if the obstacles to closer integration are to be successfully overcome. <sup>29/</sup>

As students of the East African Community who are generally sympathetic to the idea of regional integration, Segal, Hansen and Hazlewood have all been concerned with "backwash" and with the difficulty of securing a more equitable distribution of industries, jobs and investment - particularly between Kenya, the most highly developed of the three East African states and its (former) partners Tanzania and Uganda. They also identify the main problem as a political one, emphasising that in the Third World most economic decisions affecting the allocation of scarce resources are inevitably assigned to the domain of "high" rather than "low" or "welfare" politics.

With Kenya attracting what seemed to the other states a disproportionate share of external investment after independence, it became increasingly difficult and then impossible for the three East

African leaders to reach a political consensus on the most pressing issues. Each country tended to perceive its own interests and those of its partners in a very different light. And there were other problems to complicate the situation. From the start the Presidents of Kenya and Tanzania differed over ideology and the type of economic system that each wanted to implement. And in 1971 a military coup brought a change of government in Uganda which introduced new political strains into the community.

Only joint political action in the 'sixties could have removed some of all of the grievances of the two most disaffected partners, Tanzania and Uganda, and some such action was indeed attempted. But by the time the East African Presidents came to sign the Treaty for East African Cooperation, in 1967, the common currency had been abandoned and the operations of the customs union were already seriously impaired by quantitative restrictions on the movement of goods across national frontiers. <sup>30/</sup>

Hansen has complained of "premature" over-politicisation within the East African Community and has regretted that the regional secretariat was not empowered to implement an industrial location policy for the community as a whole. <sup>31/</sup> After independence the community's civil servants quickly came to refer all important and many unimportant decisions to the three Presidents, thereby removing a potential source of consensus. J. Ravenhill mentioned similar factors in his account of the breakdown of the EAC, citing in particular "backwash" effects, the need for political mechanisms to provide more effective compensation, or better to tackle the root cause of the disagreements, the very limited authority enjoyed by the regional institutions, and the failure of the leaders to cooperate. <sup>32/</sup>

Segal, too, refers to the concentration of gains in Kenya and in its capital Nairobi, and to the growing dissatisfaction of its two partners. The sense of frustration felt by all three political leaders at the constraints of economic inter-dependence were no way alleviated by the inability of the community to take effective action to resolve their various complaints. The matter could be resolved ultimately in only one of two ways : either by increasing the level of political integration so that the community could take remedial action, or by reducing the level of economic integration, enabling each state to strike out in a different direction. <sup>33/</sup> It was the second strategy that finally prevailed.

Segal and Ravenhill have both tried to summarise the reasons for the failure of the EAC (and other regional groupings) and in doing so have tried to suggest a number of the conditions necessary for the success of regional integration schemes among under-developed countries. Segal has cited four such conditions for economic integration. The community;

- (1) must offer economic benefits to each unit, including an agreement on the distribution of benefits;
- (2) must not threaten existing beneficial relationships or it must replace them with new ones;
- (3) must not constrain the policy of nation-building;
- (4) must not threaten the bases of support of existing national political elites.

Ravenhill lists five causes for the collapse of the EAC - one very general and four more specific, closely resembling the "conditions" enumerated by Segal. Like Hansen, however, he wants stronger regional institutions with more discretionary power - second point - which might be seen as challenging Segal's third condition. He also points to the absence in East Africa of effective pressure groups with a vested interest in furthering regional economic cooperation.- which was something we did try to encourage in West Africa during the 'seventies. Ravenhill's third point is very close to Segal's first condition ; That integration can only succeed in the long term if all parties make net gains and provided these are seen to be distributed equally. Ravenhill's fourth point regarding what he calls "asymmetrical inter-dependence" is similar to Segal's second condition, while Ravenhill's fifth and last proposition relates to the ideological differences among the East African leaders and presumably corresponds to Segal's fourth condition.

One problem with this kind of analysis is that conditions for integration derived from the (unsuccessful) experience of one community may not be applicable to others elsewhere. Moreover, Segal's four conditions are so broad and sweeping as to make almost any kind of regional economic community appear an unrealistic proposition. And, finally, criteria that are appropriate to an assessment of an economic union of advanced industrial nations like the OECD may have less relevance for integration in the context of Third World countries. There the principal goal of regional economic integration is not peace and security, or incremental gains in welfare, but development itself, in the sense of a major contribution to the structural

transformation of their economies. Axline has gone even further insisting that "because of important basic economic and political differences between advanced industrialised economies and the economies of under-developed countries, the theory of economic integration within the context of development is different. <sup>35/</sup>

#### Creation of ECOWAS

Scholars have still to explain why it is that developing countries, and their leaders, continue to propose and to try to organise regional economic groupings despite occasional failure and frequent adverse comments concerning the utility of such bodies, and their ability to achieve their objectives. The answer is surely that, where developed countries can choose among a number of options in their conscious attempts to maximise economic growth and increase welfare, developing countries cannot afford to neglect any strategy that, given the right conditions, seems to offer reasonable prospects of accelerated growth and higher living standards.

Trade diversification and industrialisation already figured prominently among the strategies of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) in the early 'fifties. Import substitution was then seen as the most direct and appropriate means of achieving those goals and substantial progress was made for a time, particularly among the larger states. But even there the limited purchasing power of the population and the restricted

size of the national markets were an insuperable barrier to further development by that means alone. Moreover, the proliferation of almost identical small-scale industries, sheltering behind high tariff walls in neighbouring countries, failed to make the expected contribution to development and did not generate the "poles" of industrial growth that were to have provided the impetus for economic "take-off". <sup>36/</sup>

Hence the attractions of regional economic integration and the subsequent experiments in Central and South America, the Caribbean, and in South-East Asia where, however, defence and strategic arguments were probably more important. Because the economic alternatives are few and largely unattractive the failure of a particular regional community is likely to lead only to a re-assessment of the conditions for successful integration and to further experiments using modified structures, and with suitable adjustments to the regional boundaries and some alterations in the priorities.

In this respect it is perhaps significant that the Economic Community of West African States, the most ambitious attempt at regional economic integration to date, was established in 1975, the year that also saw the disbandment of the East African Community, probably the most complete and, for a time, the most successful example of regional integration anywhere in the Third World. <sup>37/</sup> And now there are indications that, nearly a decade later, the East African leaders are beginning to regret the break-down of the EAC and are looking for new forms of economic cooperation.



Meanwhile the Central African Customs Union (UDEAC) has now been expanded to include Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi, the new grouping to be known as the Economic Community of Central African States. And, even more recently, a Preferential Trade Area of some fourteen East and Central African states has been constituted, with the aim of re-directing trade away from colonial and European markets and towards neighbouring African states. There is also a Southern African Development and Coordination Committee whose purpose is to reduce the economic dependency of the Southern African states on the white minority regime in South Africa. <sup>38/</sup>

With regard to our own Economic Community of West African States, whose formation and establishment is the subject of this thesis, the comparisons with other regional communities is certainly interesting, particularly as West African leaders were themselves greatly influenced by the examples of the EEC and the EAC. Frequently problems encountered in one community will recur elsewhere, although not necessarily in the same guise or with the same consequences. But the differences may be even more significant.

There are a number of features that appear to be more or less unique to ECOWAS. The number of states involved in other regional communities has usually been fairly restricted. There were only three in the case of the EAC, while four countries signed the treaty creating the Central American Common Market, seven member states subscribed to the Montevideo Treaty establishing the Latin American Free Trade Association in 1960, and, prior

to the withdrawal of Chile, the Andean Pact comprised six states. ECOWAS now includes sixteen countries in all which is every state in the West African region. It even contains a number of other, distinct sub-regional groupings ranging from the Francophone West African Economic Community, with four member states and two others enjoying observer status, to the various bi-lateral arrangements linking neighbouring countries. (Table 1).

In such a large community there was (and still is) less opportunity for the emergence of the kind of personal quarrels and ideological rivalries that did so much to disrupt the EAC. Nor is ECOWAS so vulnerable to political instability among the states comprising it : a change of regime is unlikely to paralyse the community in the way that the Ugandan coup of 1971 brought the EAC to an effective halt. Within West Africa the initial economic discrepancies were also much less marked than was the case in the Central and South American groupings and in the Caribbean example described by Axline. Even Nigeria, with its oil, size and population, had a lower per capita income than several of its partners, including the Ivory Coast and, for a time, Ghana.

While the poorer, Sahel states in ECOWAS would naturally be concerned at possible "backwash" effects - which was why we envisaged the Fund for Compensation and Development, which was by no means restricted to compensation alone - the single most important barrier to be overcome within our region was not that between more and less developed states, or coastal and land-locked ones, but between French and English-speaking states. And the very creation of the community, in 1975, suggested that the linguistic divide was already much less prominent than a decade earlier. It is to be hoped that it is even less pronounced now than in 1975.

TABLE 1

THE COUNTRIES OF WEST AFRICA

	Area (sq.kl.)	Population <sup>1</sup> 1975	Density (per sq. kl.)	Date of Independence	Former Colonial Power
BENIN	112,622	3,112,000	28	August 1 1960	France
CAPE VERDE	4,033	294,000	73	July 5,1973	Portugal
THE GAMBIA	11,295	524,000	46	Feb.18, 1963	United Kingdom
GHANA	238,537	9,866,000	41	March 6,1957	United Kingdom
GUINEA	245,957	4,416,000	18	October 2,1958	France
GUINEA-BISSAU	36,129	525,000	15	Sept.10,1974	Portugal
IVORY COAST	322,463	6,673,000 <sup>2</sup>	21	August 7,1960	France
LIBERIA	111,369	1,708,000	15	July 26,1857	France
MALI	1,240,000	5,697,000	5	Sept.22,1960	France
MAURITANIA	1,030,700	1,318,000	1	Nov. 28,1960	France
NIGER	1,267,000	4,600,000	4	August 3,1960	France
NIGERIA	923,768	62,925,000	68	October 1,1960	United Kingdom
SENEGAL	196,192	5,085,000 <sup>2</sup>	26	August 20,1960	France
SIERRA LEONE	71,740	2,729,000 <sup>2</sup>	38	April 27, 1961	United Kingdom
TOGO	56,000	2,222,000	40	April 27, 1960	France
UPPER VOLTA	274,200	6,032,000	22	August 5,1960	France

Source: (1) Demographic Yearbook,1975 (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E/F.76.XIII.1.1977), Table 3. These figures are mid-year estimates.

(2) These figures are from the United Nations "Population and Vital Statistics Report," Statistical Papers Series A, Volume XXVII, No.4, 1976.

Moreover, the motivations that have inspired governments to join ECOWAS are, as we hope to show, sufficiently diverse to permit each and every state to draw some immediate benefit from the community and to prevent bargaining within the community from ever coming to resemble a zero - (still less a negative) - sum game. The long-term expectations of the member governments were similar if not identical - growth and development - but the short-term objectives were many and varied and were amenable to negotiation and, where necessary, compromise.

In the case of the EAC, writers have complained of the weakness of the regional institutions and of the absence of a core state with sufficient strength, economic as well as political, to provide an element of leadership for the community as a whole. This was not, however, the case with ECOWAS. By the 'seventies Nigeria was able to take the initiative, with several of its neighbours, in mobilising support for the idea of ECOWAS and Nigerian governments, since 1975, have no doubt continued to be well aware of their special responsibility with regard to the community - which is as necessary to Nigeria's future security as it is to her economic development.

We did not, however, envisage a strong regional administration for the community, or the delegation of substantial powers to its executive institutions, partly because we felt that the community was not lacking in effective leadership and a sense of purpose and direction, but also because it is customary in West Africa for important political decisions affecting the region or any part of it to be taken by the governments concerned - and

after extensive consultation. A highly developed sense of participation seemed to promise better and more lasting results both in the short and long-term - than a brief and pointless display of high-handed efficiency by bureaucrats who lacked the means to impose their policies.

There was yet another important difference between ECOWAS and the now defunct EAC. The East African leaders inherited their regional community more or less complete, from the colonial power at independence. Their new concern with national sovereignty naturally led them to question many of the administrative arrangements which, however beneficial in themselves, were seen as constraints on political action, particularly in the case of the two less developed states. ECOWAS, on the other hand, was a creation of the West African leaders themselves, after more than fifteen years of trying to operate existing structures within pre-ordained frontiers. Far from being a product of colonial rule it was a reaction against the colonial legacy, and represented the beginnings of collective self-reliance. ECOWAS was designed specifically to remove the artificial barriers to trade and development that was a direct and unfortunate consequence of colonial occupation. There was little risk, therefore, of West African leaders attempting to undo their own handiwork and destroy the results of years of painful gestation. (Table 2 & 3).

My thesis is primarily concerned with developments in West Africa prior to the actual formation of ECOWAS in 1975, largely because these were events in which I myself was privileged to participate as Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria between 1966 and 1975. And they were also events in which my government exhibited a very keen and

**TABLE 2**  
**1968 MATRIX OF WEST AFRICAN TRADE (in million US dollars)**

Country of Origin	Benin	Gambia	Ghana	Guinea B.	Guinea R.	Ivory Coast	Liberia	Mali	Mauritania	Niger	Nigeria	Senegal	Sierra Leone	Togo	Upper Volta	Total W. Africa	Total E. C.	World	% W.A./World	% E.C./World
Benin	0.045	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Gambia	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Ghana	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Guinea B.	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Guinea R.	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Ivory Coast	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Liberia	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Mali	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Mauritania	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Niger	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Nigeria	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Senegal	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Sierra Leone	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Togo	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Upper Volta	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Total W. Africa	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Total E. C.	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
World	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
% W.A./World	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
% E.C./World	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002

Source: IMF Direction of Trade 1968-1972

TABLE 3  
1972 MATRIX OF WEST AFRICAN TRADE  
(In million US dollars)

Importing Countries	Dahomey	Gambia	Ghana	Guinea B.	Guinea R.	Ivory Coast	Liberia	Mali	Mauritania	Niger	Nigeria	Senegal	Sierra Leone	Togo	Upper Volta	Total W. Africa	Total E.E.C.	World	% W.A./World	% E.E.C./World
Extraneous of Origin																				
Dahomey			0.069				0.061			0.030	0.009	1.506	0.007	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Guinea B.	0.000	0.000	0.000																	
Guinea R.						0.000	0.000	0.000												
Ivory Coast							0.062	0.000												
Liberia								0.000												
Mali								0.000												
Mauritania																				
Niger																				
Nigeria																				
Senegal																				
Sierra Leone																				
Togo																				
Upper Volta																				
Total W. Africa																				
Total E.E.C.																				
World																				
% W.A./World																				
% E.E.C./World																				

Source:

IMF Direction of Trade 1968-1972

active interest. In the following chapters I have tried to explain the long gestation of the community in terms that are necessarily simplified but which do, I hope, serve to identify clearly the main trends and the principal themes of a particularly turbulent period of West African history; but also a period that, in retrospect, seems to have marked a decisive turning point in post-colonial development inside Nigeria and also within the region.

For it was in these years that Nigeria came at last to identify completely, not only with Africa but also with the region of which it is such a large and important part and whose complexity is reflected in the geographical and cultural composition of Nigeria itself. Nor was the identification between the two either sentimental in character or temporary in duration. It arose in the 'sixties largely from our need for external security at a time of acute domestic crisis, it later flourished in the 'seventies under the impact of sudden economic change in Nigeria and a global economic crisis. J.P.Renninger has noted that before the 'seventies;

... it was possible to at least envisage appropriate development strategies for the small states that did not involve close collaboration with neighbours. All of this has now changed and the international environment must be considered a powerful force propelling small states towards integration.

39/

It was also a time when our Francophone friends and neighbours came to see Nigeria increasingly as a prospective partner in economic development and as a valued ally in the common struggle for equity and



independence in every sphere - a welcome change from the days when Nigeria was considered an economic challenge in the leading Francophone states and was regarded as, in some ways, even more threatening than the radical, socialist and pan-African regimes of Presidents Nkrumah and Touré. Reviewing the period as a whole then it is our contention that national and regional integration were always more closely linked, at least in West Africa, than economists like Balassa would seem to suggest, while regional integration was considerably influenced by the rapid dissolution in the 'seventies of the international economic order set up in the West after World War II.

By the time the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was formed national integration had already made substantial progress among all member states. While Nigeria had always been among the most enthusiastic exponents of regional economic integration, our country was unable to play a key role until her own unity was first consolidated, following the successful outcome of the civil war in 1970. At the same time, governments in West Africa increasingly came to recognise that political sovereignty itself had little meaning and even less substance in the absence of effective control over their economic destinies. This was particularly marked among the second generation of African leaders after independence who were often military personnel.

Even then it required the departure of General de Gaulle as President of France in 1969, the abrupt and, for the French-speaking African states, damaging devaluation of the Franc following the appointment of the new president, and the global economic crisis in the early 'seventies, aggravated by the Middle East War in 1973, before many of the Francophone

states came to perceive that their best prospects of development lay in improved relations with their Anglophone neighbours, especially Nigeria, rather than in total dependence on France.

### Organisation of the Thesis

The first part of the thesis deals mainly with West Africa in the period from independence until the mid-'sixties and with the debate between advocates of continental unity, largely on a political basis, led by the Casablanca bloc, and Nigeria's own support for a regional economic grouping which enjoyed the backing of the Monrovia states. The same period saw the creation of innumerable groupings, initially sub-regional in character, but soon becoming continental in scope. Until the creation of the Organisation of African Unity, in 1963, such groupings tended to be political rather than economic but the existence of the new political forum grouping of all African states helped confine the other organisations within a predominantly economic role.

The second part deals with the second half of the 'sixties, when most African states were experiencing serious economic problems and the contrast between political independence and economic dependency was all too apparent to their leadership. Where the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) had long been active in encouraging the movement towards regional economic integration, the first serious steps in that direction in West Africa were taken during, and immediately after 1966 with the conference of regional leaders in Niamey (1966), Accra (1967) and finally Monrovia (1968). These meetings were attended by representatives of French and English speaking states and their aim was the creation of a West African Regional Group.

While the Nigerian civil war, from 1967 until 1970, was certainly an important, if temporary, obstacle to the realisation of that worthy ambition - although my government willingly gave whatever support it could and attended all meetings - it was by no means the only, or even the principal obstacle. Even more serious was the continuing rivalry among the Francophone states of the region, between the leaders of Senegal and the Ivory Coast, and between these two states and Guinea. There was also General de Gaulle's unwarranted intervention in the Nigerian civil war in 1968 and the decision by the Ivory Coast to recognise "Biafra" and her subsequent support for the rebellion. These incidents, notwithstanding the loyal support we received in Nigeria from our immediate Francophone neighbours, all contributed to the collapse of the Regional Group initiative.

The third part of the thesis is concerned with the efforts of Nigeria and our Francophone near-neighbour, Togo, to re-launch the regional enterprise following the Nigerian civil war and in the context of our efforts to promote reconciliation both at home and abroad, throughout Africa. The role of Togo was, as I will suggest, crucial in enabling us to circumvent attempts by the French government and its African allies to pre-empt the creation of ECOWAS by improvising a new Francophone grouping within the region, the West African Economic Community (CEAO). The assistance of Togo and also of Liberia was again invaluable during the many meetings and discussions held in 1973 and 1974 to prepare for the final inauguration of ECOWAS. The outcome of these conferences was the Lagos Summit of May 1975, when the ECOWAS Treaty was accepted and signed by the West African Heads of State and subsequently ratified by their governments.

The fourth and final part of the thesis offers an account of the various ECOWAS institutions and their operation between 1975 and 1982. Although closely associated with the formation of ECOWAS I have had no direct contact with that body, or indeed with the Nigerian government, since leaving my country to undertake study abroad in 1975. My description of ECOWAS and of its subsequent activities is therefore based on the reports of the community and documentation concerning it, and on more or less detailed accounts published in various newspapers and journals.

For these reasons I have not attempted an exhaustive or definitive account of this latest period. Nor is it my intention to try to emulate other scholars by providing a balance sheet for the community or attempting to evaluate its work and progress to date. Unlike the EAC, ECOWAS is by no means moribund - far from it - and it seems to me much too early to attempt even a preliminary, let alone a final judgement. In any case by what criteria would one evaluate its work? There are the goals and objectives of the community, there are the aspirations of the individual member states in so far as these are known, and there is the detailed time-table for economic and social integration set out in the Treaty and the Protocols. (Annex 1 & 5)

The fact that the membership remains intact and loyal, that the community is very much in being, and that serious attempts are being made to keep to the original time-table suggests that, despite many initial difficulties, ECOWAS is afloat and on course. ECOWAS owes its creation to the realisation by West African governments that they were, one and all, exceptionally

vulnerable to developments on the international as well as the domestic scene, developments that were political, military and, above all since 1973, economic. These are factors over which, as individual states, we have little or no control. In the mid-'seventies, despite the general upturn in the world economy after the earlier crisis, most of the West African countries continued to suffer from the dislocations following from that crisis. <sup>40</sup>

The position has not changed much today. Now, as then, the problem can only be resolved by joint action and a combined effort to work for and secure changes in the economic order that will favour the less developed nations. It may be that the best chance of economic diversification and agricultural self-sufficiency - at least in edible grains and foodstuffs - is a formed collective self-reliance. But, as J.P. Renninger has pointed out:

Although ECOWAS can undoubtedly contribute to the collective self-reliance of the West African sub-region, it will not, by itself, be able to achieve collective self-reliance.

41/

This, he explains as "one of the genuine paradoxes of economic cooperation among developing countries."

For economic integration to be meaningful and lead to collective self-reliance, very advanced forms of integration, such as control of new technology, importation and industrial location, are required. Yet such advanced forms of integration presuppose an abrogation of sovereignty that, for political reasons, few leaders of developing countries are willing to contemplate.

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Economists and others are still debating whether developing countries can still derive important benefits from more traditional forms of integration such as the free trade area and the customs union and whether integration, to be effective, does indeed, as Axline and Renninger suggest, require a high degree of coordination and a centrally administered regional policy. <sup>43/</sup> In any case as Renninger concedes, the ECOWAS Treaty provides for all these eventualities and it is for the community's leaders to choose those instruments best suited to their region's present needs. It is earnestly to be hoped that ECOWAS will before long realise its full potential as a force for economic and social development, and that the West African leaders will continue to provide the kind of political support that made ECOWAS possible in the first place.

While working on the thesis I had the good fortune to encounter two excellent books both of which deal exclusively with ECOWAS - those by J.P. Renninger and R.I. Onwuka. <sup>44/</sup> It is an indirect tribute to ECOWAS that such material is already appearing in published form and I hope that these books, which set such a high standard, will be the precursors of many others. There is obviously some overlap between my own account and material to be found in both books, but their works are largely complementary to my own since Onwuka has approached the subject with an emphasis on the economic aspects of the community, while Renninger is mainly concerned with the activities of the community between 1975 and the end of 1977. There have also been a number of very useful articles concerned with the formation of ECOWAS and certain aspects of its activity, and these I have either cited in the text or included in the bibliography.

There is one final matter of terminology. Whereas the Organisation of African Unity, the Economic Commission for Africa, and all official African documentation describes West Africa as a "sub-region" and ECOWAS is therefore referred to as a "sub-regional" community, this creates difficulties when one has to discuss groupings of states that are smaller than ECOWAS in both numbers and territorial extent. I have therefore tried consistently to use the word "region" when discussing West (or Central, North or East) Africa and will refer to ECOWAS as a "regional" grouping by contrast with smaller groupings which are "sub-regional" and larger, more ambitious ones which I have described as "continental".

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1. B.Balassa, The Theory of Economic Integration, p.1.
2. G.Myrdal, An International Economy, p.11.
3. B.Balassa, 'A Theory of Economic Integration', in M.S.Wionczek (ed.) Latin American Economic Integration, p.23.
4. Ibid.,pp.23-24.
5. B.Balassa, The Theory of Economic Integration, p.273
6. Ibid.,p.2.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.,p.1.
10. Ibid.,p.1. ft.2.
11. C.Pentland, 'The Regionalization of World Politics ; Concept and Evidence', International Journal, 30, 1975, p.62.
12. B.Balassa, The Theory of Economic Integration, p.25.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. H.Kitamura, 'Economic Integration of Underdeveloped Regions', in M.S.Wionczek (ed.), Latin American Integration, p.44.
16. "Certain benefits from integration are realised within free trade areas, the most limited form of economic union. These benefits are mainly the static effects of trade creation. Other benefits, such as increased bargaining strength in tariff negotiations, cannot be realised without the establishment of a customs union with its common external tariff. And many of the dynamic effects of integration cannot be realised without the freeing of restrictions on other factors of production such as labour and capital, requiring a common market, or without a coordination of economic policies in monetary, fiscal and social matters requiring an economic union."  
W.A.Axline, Caribbean Integration : the Politics of Regionalism, p.5.
17. "This results from a combination of the realisation of the rewards from the first steps of integration and the recognition that there are limits on those rewards which can be overcome only by going on to the next higher step of integration."  
W.A.Axline, Caribbean Integration : the Politics of Regionalism, p.5.



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18. Ibid.
19. B.Balassa, The Theory of Economic Integration, p.155.  
The comment follows an account of possible external economies that under-developed countries might achieve through an enlarged market.
20. Jacob Viner, The Customs Union Issue.
21. A view associated with Stanley Hoffmann, see R.D.Hansen, 'Regional Integration : Reflections on a Decade of Theoretical Efforts', World Politics, 21(2), 1969, pp.242-71.
22. Linked by Hansen with the writings of Ernst B.Hass. Ibid.
23. A.Segal, 'The Integration of Developing Countries : Some Thoughts on East Africa and Central America,', Journal of Common Market Studies, 5, 1967.
24. A.Hazlewood, Economic Integration : the East African Experience, p.17.
25. "The customs union composed of underdeveloped nations is formed to ensure that future resources are employed in such a way that there is trade diversion - but trade diversion in a specific direction, i.e., from an advanced country to the most efficient producer of a given commodity among the union membership."  
S.B.Linder, 'Customs Unions and Economic Development', in M.S.Wionczek (ed.), Latin American Integration, p.40.  
"As shown by the traditional theory of economic integration, there is very little likelihood of trade creation and a great likelihood of trade diversion occurring within regional integration schemes among under-developed countries. This is because there is little industrial production and the probability that the low-cost producer of any commodity will be found within the region is small."  
A.W.Axline, Caribbean Integration : the Politics of Regionalism, p.12.
26. A.Segal, op.cit., and R.Hansen, op.cit.
27. Gunnar Myrdal is usually credited with the terms "spread" and "backwash", while M.Hirschman employs the expressions "trickle down" and "polarization".
28. Axline, op.cit., p.5; also W.A.Axline, 'Underdevelopment, Dependence and Integration : the Politics of Regionalism in the Third World', International Organisation, 31(1), 1977, pp.83-105.
29. See his chapter on 'Political Theory and Regional Integration', which is in fact concerned with "negotiating integration schemes". Ibid., ch.2, pp.32-60.
30. A. Hazlewood, Economic Integration : the East African Experience, ch.7. ('The Treaty for East African Cooperation'). pp.70-87; also J.S.Nye, Economic Integration in Africa, ch.4 ('Economic Integration in East Africa') pp.97-170.

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31. Hansen, op.cit.
32. J.Ravenhill, 'Regional Integration and Development in Africa : Lessons from the East African Community', Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics, 17 (3), 1979.
33. Segal, op.cit.
34. Ibid., p.263.
35. Axline, op.cit., p.7: "The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the benefits from economic integration which are developed from the traditional theory are not at all likely to be produced within integration schemes of under-developed countries." Ibid.
36. "By the middle of the past decade, the region as a whole had achieved a very advanced level of import substitution in the case of consumer manufactures, while an increasing number of Latin American republics had started to produce capital goods ... However, in every country, industrialisation to date - achieved in a majority of cases under the aegis of strong tariff protection - has been accompanied by high costs, low productivity, idle production capacity, and, consequently, high prices to the consumer. In some instances ... a situation has been reached that simply cannot be sustained in the long run."  
 P.C.Reynoso, 'Problems of Regional Industrialisation', in M.S. Wionczek (ed.), op.cit., pp.154-155.  
 Cf. the remarks by D.H.McClelland concerning the Central American Market.  
 "The general objective of commercial-industrial policies is, of course, the production of economic development, as is also the case for the more specialised instrument of import substitution ... The Common Market and the import substitution it has induced have contributed greatly in dealing with Central America's problems of unemployment and foreign exchange shortages ... Industrialisation and import substitution, however, have plainly fallen far short of solving the problems. Unemployment and under-employment, although less critical than in some developing countries, remain serious and are probably on the rise ... it seems, moreover, that import substitution has passed its peak."  
The Central American Common Market : Economic Policies, Economic Growth and Choices for the Future, pp.150-151.
37. A. Hazlewood, 'The End of the East African Community', Journal of Common Market Studies, 21, September, 1979, pp.40-56; R.H.Green, 'The East African Community : the End of the Road', Africa Contemporary Record, 9, 1976, 7, A59; A.T.Mugomba, 'Regional Organisations and African Under-development : the collapse of the EAC', Journal of Modern African Studies, 16 (2), 1978, pp.261-273.

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38. R.H.Green, 'Towards Southern African Regionalism', Africa Contemporary Record, 11, 1978-9, A40; R.H.Green, 'Southern African Development Coordination : the Struggle Continues', Africa Contemporary Record, 13, 1980-1, A24.
39. "Economic conditions in most of the West African states did not become really precarious until the 1970s." J.P.Renninger, Multinational Cooperation for Development in West Africa, p.66.
40. "West African countries, individually, are almost helpless when it comes to remedying this situation. Individually, they can do nothing about the prices received for their exports; individually, they can do nothing about what they pay for imports; and individually, they cannot begin to reorient their economies in more promising directions outside of the agricultural field. Industrialisation, as we have previously demonstrated, is only practicable within the context of a larger market such as that provided by ECOWAS." Renninger, op.cit., p.65.
41. Renninger, p.64.
42. Renninger, p.65.
43. "The ECOWAS Treaty does not ignore this other important aspect of economic integration. Among the major aims of the Treaty are the harmonisation of agricultural and industrial policies and the setting up of joint ventures. However, the language of the Treaty with respect to these matters is rather vague and falls somewhat short of the vigorous measures that would need to be taken to begin the process of merging West African economies." His complaint seems to be that in all such matters the final decisions are to be left to the Authority of Heads of State and Government, rather than to other, more specialised community institutions. Also that, while the Council of Ministers is invited to act to reduce the community's economic dependence on the outside world "yet no institution or body in ECOWAS is empowered to negotiate with outside forces on behalf of ECOWAS. Neither has any institution been established to control the importation of technology. Indeed, the relations of ECOWAS with the outside world, which are crucial if reducing dependence is a goal, are largely ignored by the Treaty." Renninger, p.64.
44. J.P.Renninger, Multinational Cooperation for Development in West Africa (N.Y. and Oxford, 1979); R.I.Onwuka, Development and Integration in West Africa : the Case of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (Ife, 1982).

CHAPTER 2COOPERATION IN INDEPENDENT WEST AFRICA : THE  
FORMATIVE YEARS (1958-1960)

The ratification of the ECOWAS Treaty in 1975 must be seen as the outcome of long and continuing diplomatic efforts to establish some form of political and economic community among the West African states. Already, in November 1958, the leaders of Ghana and Guinea had announced their decision to combine as the nucleus of a proposed Union of West African States which would be the first independent attempt at integration in the region. The political and economic union of the two states was intended to encourage and direct the anticipated movement by independent countries towards West African, then continental, unity. It could scarcely be described as a regional or even sub-regional grouping, however, as the two countries directly involved shared no common frontier and, despite the ideological affinities of their rulers, there was little evidence or indeed prospect of convergence between their political, social and economic systems.

This and even more ambitious schemes for union reflected the Pan-African aspirations of Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first Prime Minister and later President, and in particular the importance he attached to the political unity of Africa and to the early creation of a continental administration. To him, regional unity, while desirable as a first stage, was not sufficient in itself as only a united Africa could achieve real independence. Even this qualified support for regional organisation turned quickly to suspicion and mistrust as neighbouring states failed to respond favourably to his overtures while others, including Nigeria and the principal Francophone states, Senegal and the Ivory Coast, would soon act to contain what they saw as the growing threat from Ghana's expansionist policies. As Nkrumah finally concluded

that unity in Africa would have to be built from the top down he became an outspoken critic of regionalism - which partly explains his strong opposition in 1963 to the proposed East African Federation. 1/

It was perhaps Nkrumah's misfortune that his territorial base, Ghana, although larger and initially more prosperous than many other African states, did not, in terms of its population, size or even resources begin to match the scale of his political ambitions. He was able, however, to capitalise on Ghana's prestige as the first black African state to become independent from colonial rule, and on her comparative social development and relative affluence which made her, at the time, an important contender for power in Africa. With most of the continent still under colonial domination a sovereign and independent Ghana was bound to attract widespread and sympathetic attention and was soon the focus of more universal aspirations towards independence and unity. W.Scott Thompson has noted that:

Excluding India, none of the successor states in the post-colonial era aroused so many hopes as Ghana ... On attaining independence Ghanaian leaders pledged to work towards the liberation of the rest of the continent, accumulating immense political capital in making their state the Mecca of African nationalism. Thus Pan-Africanism, an historical movement championing the cause of black people, was brought to African soil for the first time. 2/

There is no doubt that this vision of African unity was and remains a source of inspiration and hope for African peoples everywhere and a goal no serious leader would wish to ignore. It is the more unfortunate, therefore, that Nkrumah, having, like other distinguished African leaders before him, identified closely with that goal, and having done much to publicise and propagate it, should then have been tempted to utilise it for more immediate and - to his many critics - less altruistic ends, thus

provoking the very quarrels and divisions that would be so damaging to his cause and to Africa. In March 1957, however, such considerations would have been out of place as African delegations gathered in Accra for Ghana's independence celebrations. It was rather in an atmosphere of euphoria and optimism that they discussed and approved proposals for a subsequent meeting of government leaders and it was Accra that would, a year later, host the first Conference of Independent African States (CIAS).

Such was their determination to achieve universality and inclusiveness that the sponsors contrived to exclude the more controversial items from the list of proposed resolutions while even South Africa was invited to attend, but declined, thereby missing a remarkable opportunity to be associated at the outset with Africa's political and economic organisation. <sup>3/</sup> There were the expected resolutions demanding an early end to colonial rule and a rigid timetable for the independence of the remaining territories, and calling on the colonial powers to refrain from acts of repression and arbitrary rule and to end all forms of discrimination. The Conference also accepted a proposal for joint economic research and consultation among its members with the object, eventually, of creating an African Common Market. Nkrumah seems, however, to have been disappointed with the outcome of the Conference, whose leaders were perhaps too conservative and too independent for his taste, having resisted his advice to dispense with existing 'colonial' frontiers and move quickly towards a single continental union. <sup>4/</sup> "At the CIAS meeting in 1958, the majority of the governments had shown quite clearly that they were not ready for [political federation either at regional or continental level] and that they preferred to work towards unity slowly by tackling certain common problems jointly." <sup>5/</sup>

Searching perhaps for a wider and more accommodating audience and a more imposing platform for his views, Nkrumah turned from the handful of independent states with their well entrenched rulers and sought to align himself more closely with the nationalist parties, now proliferating in the dependent territories in anticipation of an early independence. Without the responsibilities of office, their leaders were likely to be more militant and anti-colonial and, given the difficult circumstances in which they had to operate, were therefore more receptive to radical views, particularly when accompanied by material and financial incentives. In December 1958 it was therefore, an All African Peoples' Conference (AAPC) that met in Accra with representatives of the independent states this time in a small minority - having only eight delegates compared with some twenty from the dependent territories.

The radical platform of the AAPC set the tone for future Pan-African deliberations. This time the resolutions condemned imperialism and colonialism outright, denounced racialism particularly as practised in South Africa, and were uncompromising in their opposition to 'tribalism'. There was also strong and unequivocal support for the African 'Freedom Fighters'. Other resolutions endorsed the principle of African unity, even if delegates differed over the form it should take and the method by which it might best be achieved. There was sympathy, too, for the demands already being voiced in various parts of Africa for regional groupings of states : but on condition that they were restricted to independent countries and were in no way prejudicial to the main objective of a Pan-African Commonwealth or United States of Africa. They must also conform to the popular will expressed through a referendum organised on the basis of universal adult suffrage. <sup>6/</sup> It was "the strong support for the idea of federation given by the AAPC", that in the opinion of one observer, "had helped to discredit the organisation" <sup>7.</sup>

While the AAPC was more sympathetic to Nkrumah's views than the earlier CIAS, its deliberations inevitably carried less weight as the majority of the participants had no governmental responsibilities and the organisers had some discretion in choosing the movements to be represented. <sup>8/</sup> And, as the debates became more specific and detailed, significant differences began to emerge among the delegations, reflecting their varied backgrounds, and composition and the cleavage between those representing independent states and those without 'official' status. Again it would seem that Nkrumah had not been able to obtain the kind of disciplined and coherent forum that he required for his more ambitious proposals. Even in such a selective body as the AAPC differences emerged that would soon crystallise into divisions which, under the impact of new issues and external pressures, would then assume a better organised and more competitive form. In West Africa these divisions would give rise to political associations as diverse as the Ghana-Guinea Union, the Mali Federation, the Council of the Entente, the Sanniquellie Agreement, and the Union of African States. And as events and personalities conspired to drive radical and moderate groups further apart, Africa would quickly be polarised into rival ideological camps.

#### Ghana-Guinea Union and its successors

It was the last minute decision by Sékou Touré of Guinea to defy General de Gaulle and opt for independence in September 1958, notwithstanding the terrible economic and administrative reprisals exacted by the French, which accelerated the French programme of de-colonisation and at the same time provided Nkrumah with an early and loyal partner in West Africa. Nkrumah was willing and for a time able - within the limits of his increasingly straitened economy - to assist states like Guinea and later Mali, whose youthful and



perhaps less experienced leaders shared certain of his radical and socialist views and much of his Pan-African vision. At independence both Sékou Touré of Guinea and Modibo Keita of Mali found themselves and their states more or less isolated from France and Francophone Africa, estranged from their immediate and conservative neighbours, and without the means to finance their administration let alone a development programme. Without immediate and generous support from Ghana and other sympathetic states they might not have survived the first weeks of independence or attracted the kind of international backing that alone could guarantee their political and economic future.

The rapid succession of political groupings which sprang from the original Ghana-Guinea alliance was, however, a measure of the contingent nature of such strategies and the extent to which they reflected more immediate political considerations rather than longer term social and economic preoccupations. What was announced in November 1958 as "the nucleus of a Union of West African States", inspired both by the American union and by other, more recent examples of territorial integration, had, by May 1959, become the basis for a future Union of Independent African States. But there was growing doubt about the precise nature and orientation of the grouping and about the direction in which it was moving. Where the Ghana-Guinea Union had offered some prospect of ideological consistency, the same cannot be said of its successor, the alliance of Ghana, Guinea and Liberia, that emerged from the Sanniquellie Agreement of July 1959. This agreement gave birth to a curious and predictably still-born union of political incompatibles.

Liberia, like its powerful collaborator, the United States, had sought to befriend and assist neighbouring Guinea after its break with France. President William Tubman of Liberia nevertheless shared the profound misgivings

of other moderate leaders about the recent alliance of West Africa's two most prominent radicals. He was aware of the growing political divisions in the continent and of the threat they posed to the stability of individual states, just as he was concerned, as an elder statesman, to find some basis for mutual accommodation. Tubman clearly hoped to wean the radical leaders away from their more extreme Pan-African objectives and, as an alternative to their vision of a comprehensive and binding political union, he proposed instead a loose, confederal-type arrangement among the independent states. This new proposal excluded for the time being any element of supra-nationality and concentrated instead on political and administrative cooperation, and the improvement and expansion of existing economic and cultural ties. Nkrumah, for his part, may have been anxious to establish some kind of wider political framework as soon as possible, even on less than favourable terms, hoping thereby to reassure other moderate leaders while retaining the political initiative for Ghana and her more radical allies.

It was to Tubman's credit that the terms of the Sanniquellie Agreement closely approximated the consensus the African states would themselves reach in 1963 in their search for an acceptable form of political union. For the present, however, the ambiguous language of the Sanniquellie Agreement served mainly to underline the considerable differences between Nkrumah and Toure on the one hand and Tubman (and the moderate leaders) on the other. It appeared that the three associated states would this time constitute the nucleus of a Community of Independent African States with each retaining intact its national identity and its constitutional structures. And while the objective remained the unity of all independent African states, it was not their intention "to prejudice the present or future international policies, relations and obligations of the states involved."<sup>9/</sup> Moreover, the signatories acknowledged their readiness to abide by the principle of non-intervention

in the affairs of member-states, which the radical leaders had hitherto rejected as a defence of the 'colonial' status quo. <sup>10/</sup>

The division over political union was a central issue at the second Conference of Independent African States in June 1960 - the first such meeting to be held outside West Africa and, significantly, at Addis Ababa, future headquarters of the O.A.U. The confrontation was mainly between the two principal English-speaking countries in West Africa, Ghana and, soon to be independent Nigeria, and at the heart of the debate was a conflict over the interpretation of the Sanniquellie Agreement. The Ghanaian delegation insisted that the Association or Community of African States, discussed and accepted by the leaders of Ghana, Guinea and Liberia, had been intended primarily as a political union.

Such a political Union in their view will provide the framework within which any plans for economic, social and cultural cooperation can, in fact, operate to the best advantage of all. <sup>10/</sup>

The concluding remarks were couched in more diplomatic language aimed at maximising support for the Ghanaian position and refuting accusations of extremism.

To us in Ghana the concept of African unity is an article of faith. It is the cardinal objective of our policy. We sincerely believe that the independent Africa states can, and may some day form a real political Union - the Union of African States. It does not matter whether you start with an Association of African States or whether with economic or cultural cooperation ... we must start from somewhere, but certainly the Union can <sup>11/</sup> be achieved in the end.

The Nigerian delegation, while broadly agreeing that "Pan-Africanism is the only solution to our problems in Africa", nevertheless supported the more moderate Liberian account of the Sanniquellie Agreement - which emphasised cultural and economic cooperation between African states as a preliminary and necessary stage leading eventually to other forms of union. The Nigerian counter-attack emphasised the radical and visionary nature of Nkrumah's proposals and concluded that any lasting and beneficial form of union in Africa would have to be based on common consent.

No one doubts the need to promote Pan-Africanism... but we must not be sentimental; we must be realistic ... at this moment the idea of forming a Union of African States is premature. On the other hand we do not dispute the sincerity and indeed the good intentions of those people who advocate it. But we feel such a move is too radical - perhaps too ambitious - to be of lasting benefit... It is essential to remember that whatever ideas we may have about Pan-Africanism it will not materialise, or at least it will not materialise as quickly as we would like it to if we start building from the top downwards. We must first prepare the minds of the different countries - we must start from the known [before proceeding] to the unknown. At the moment we in Nigeria cannot afford to form a Union Government with any [other] African states by surrendering our sovereignty .... President Tubman's idea of the Association of States is therefore more acceptable for it is as yet premature to form a Union of States under one sovereignty ... If anybody makes the mistake of feeling that he is a Messiah who has got the mission to lead Africa, the whole purpose of Pan-Africanism will, I fear, be defeated.

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This confrontation between two leading West African states, already economic as well as political rivals, marked the effective end of the CIAS which had provided a useful if limited forum for exchanges among African leaders and at a time when consultation was important but difficult to organise and when the advice and experience of the elder statesmen was much needed if not always sufficiently appreciated. <sup>13/</sup> Exchanges like those over the Sanniquellie Agreement were bound to affect adversely relations among the English-speaking states of West Africa, particularly Nigeria and Ghana,

and were scarcely conducive to any form of cooperation within the region as a whole. Ghana now seemed the more determined to impose her views on the rest of the continent irrespective of the damage to African unity and to cooperation at all levels within the region as a whole. The radical Pan-Africanists were ready at last to abandon the principle of universality and inclusiveness in favour of "frankly partial organisations" whose members would share certain common objectives and attitudes.<sup>14/</sup> Ghana, Guinea and their allies abandoned the search for a *modus vivendi* with the moderate and conservative West African leaders in favour of establishing a more cohesive organisation, or pressure group, which could act effectively and promptly in any sphere to realise the limited goals of its members. The immediate need therefore was to secure new allies with a broadly similar outlook who would help create the nucleus of a group united by ideology rather than around any common regional attachment.

By December 1960 the Ghana-Guinea combination had attracted another recruit, following the break-up of the new Mali Federation and the split between its two constituents, Senegal and Soudan (later Mali), which then became independent as separate states. A grouping this time of ideological compatibles, the Ghana-Guinea-Soudan Union, or Union of African States as it described itself, was launched in auspicious circumstances, with the promise of a Ghanaian loan to Mali of \$11.2 million (US). The charter this time provided, optimistically, for mass action in all three states with a view to developing "a common ideological orientation which is absolutely necessary for the development of the Union."<sup>15/</sup> Indeed, it had been a criticism of the earlier unions that the peoples most directly affected were

largely unaware of any change in their immediate environment. There was even to be provision in the new union for some coordination of the activities of the various political parties, women's groups, trade unions and youth organisations active in each state. However, the UAS was soon incorporated in the wider Casablanca grouping created shortly afterwards. This interesting, if ambitious, attempt at political union came to an end in 1964 even as the Mali leadership began, albeit tentatively, to draw closer to France and sought to resume normal relations with their moderate, Francophone neighbours, notably Senegal.

But the prospects for extending the Ghana-Guinea Union, even within West Africa, had never been good. Ghana's economic base had been contracting since the late 'fifties with declining commodity prices, heavy government expenditures and the rapid depletion of the country's reserves. It was unlikely that she could continue to compete with, much less outbid, her more moderate and now more prosperous rivals in West Africa, the Ivory Coast and Nigeria, for the allegiance of the poorer land-locked states. Ideology alone has cemented few alliances in Africa although it may have contributed to the collapse of several. Even the political alliance between Nkrumah and Touré showed signs of weakening after 1961, particularly following the deterioration in Touré's relations with the Soviet Union and the East European socialist states.

Neither the Ghana-Guinea Union nor the later Union of African States, incorporating Mali, were well placed to realise Nkrumah's ambitions, whether for political and administrative unity, for economic integration, monetary cooperation or coordination of their developmental efforts. However commendable their objectives, however sincere their leaders, it was very doubtful, to say the least, whether there could be effective linkage between

states with such recent and contrasting colonial backgrounds belonging to completely different monetary systems and, in the case of Ghana and Guinea, with no common border. Nevertheless, just as the Sanniquellie Agreement anticipated important features of the consensus on which the OAU would later be contracted, so too the proposed Ghana-Guinea Union foreshadowed later developments within West Africa. It was the first attempt to tackle and, at a leadership level at least, surmount what has remained a critical problem for any scheme of regional integration and the association of French and English-speaking states with their very different political, administrative, monetary and cultural traditions. It was Touré's break with France in 1958 and the ideological compatibility between himself and Nkrumah that made it possible to conceive of such an association. In another sense, however, Nkrumah did much to confirm the Francophone states in their determination to remain apart from the rest of Africa. And this unfortunate legacy of mutual distrust would complicate all subsequent efforts to realise a Community of West African States - and, not least, the ECOWAS experience itself.

But to be effective any scheme of regional organisation requires the active and voluntary participation of all states within that region. It presupposes a willingness to set aside territorial quarrels, ideological differences, and political rivalries in the interests of peaceful co-existence and the common pursuit of economic and industrial development. It is significant that the one union in West Africa to survive from this early period, the Council of the Entente which grouped the Ivory Coast and three (later four) of its Francophone neighbours, owed its relative success and survival to its ability to combine political advantage with economic interests, both short and long term. Inevitably, after independence, and in a climate of intensely competitive industrialisation and strong political and economic

nationalism, such conditions were neither widespread nor readily forthcoming. Instead, what unions there were among the African states tended to be temporary accommodations inspired by political rather than economic motives : reflecting the prevailing emphasis on sovereignty and independence and the fashionable assumption that where "the political kingdom" was securely established all else, including economic development and material prosperity for the masses, would inevitably follow.

To be effective regional organisation had necessarily to work through existing structures, utilising the talent that was available, while recognising and trying to remedy any deficiencies. It therefore required a much broader consensus than seemed to exist among the African rulers just after independence. It was an enterprise calling for imagination, initiative and tact; to be successful it had to be a collective effort, however valuable the contribution of individual leaders; and the emphasis had to be on facilitating contacts, improving communications and fostering a spirit of cooperation. But it was here that Nkrumah's role was most equivocal : in his determination to secure Ghana's early independence he was largely responsible for the rapid dismantling, in the 'fifties, of the West African Common Services - a range of common administrative services provided by the British for their scattered West African territories and now sadly reduced to a single agency with very limited responsibility in the field of education. <sup>16/</sup> Later, another generation of African leaders would have to begin the difficult task of re-constituting or re-creating much of the administrative apparatus that their predecessors had so rashly discarded along with the other trappings of an alien colonial state.



Nkrumah's often intimidating manner, his impatience with those of a different persuasion, and his seemingly aggressive policies towards several of his neighbours served rather to defeat his own lofty enterprise. He set his own sights so high that he often appeared indifferent or insensitive to the views and feelings of other leaders. Impatient at what he considered their excessive caution and timidity, and their attachment to old and traditional ties, forgetful of his own youth and sometimes reluctant to show the deference due to age and experience in Africa, Nkrumah tended rather to berate or patronise when he might instead have used his considerable charm and undoubted political talent to further his own cause and that of Africa as a whole.

#### Mali Federation and Entente

Nkrumah was also partly responsible - if only in a negative sense through his radical policies, his aggressive tactics and his alliance with Sékou Touré - for the emergence at the end of 1958 of two further sub-regional groupings in West Africa. These were exclusively French-speaking in membership, mainly defensive in character and intensely competitive in outlook : contending with one another for French support, Western investment, and African involvement. Each was attempting, but by different means and with very unequal success, to redress the situation created by Guinea's independence and her defection from the French camp.

The French reprisals, ill conceived and crudely executed, had quickly failed in their initial purpose as Guinea was soon able to tap new sources of support, both African and international. Even as an example to other Francophone states in the region they were less effective than

was originally hoped, postponing independence by one or two years at most. The French government, which was experiencing difficulties with its army in Algeria and problems with its parliamentary majority back home, soon had little alternative but to concede to other African territories what it had so stubbornly refused in the case of Guinea. Confronted by the challenge from the radical alliance the Francophone states of West Africa were left largely to their own devices : to improvise what means they could to contain the dissidence and restore order in a region they had long considered their own. The result was one of the more successful and enduring experiments in inter-state cooperation, the Council of the Entente, and one of the most spectacular and short-lived failures - the Mali Federation.

Underlying these two sub-regional groupings were the growing divisions in the late 'fifties and early 'sixties among the Francophone states and their leaders. In West Africa these divisions centred around the political and economic rivalry of the two principal contenders for power, Senegal and Ivory Coast. Senegal was traditionally the leader of the Francophone states as its capital, Dakar, doubled as the administrative headquarters of French West Africa, the larger of the two federations through which France ruled her black African empire. During the 'fifties, however, the Senegalese economy was quickly overtaken by that of the Ivory Coast which then became, for a time, the major economic force in the region, eclipsing Ghana but soon threatened in its turn by the enormous size and economic potential of independent Nigeria. The dominant figure in Ivory Coast politics, Felix Houphouët-Boigny, had long advocated political devolution in French West Africa, seeing no good reason why prosperous Ivory Coast should be taxed to support her impoverished neighbours or to maintain the primacy of Dakar rather than develop her own capital at Abidjan.

Houphouët-Boigny was a staunch nationalist who seems to have valued economic prosperity more highly than political independence but was nevertheless determined to achieve both. To this end he had helped organise the African Democratic Rally (R.D.A.) in the post-war years with branches in most of the territories and an early reputation for militancy. After 1951, however, he saw no disadvantage in quickly coming to terms with the colonial administration in the Ivory Coast particularly as such limited collaboration appeared to offer the best means of generating rapid economic growth and of guaranteeing the social and political stability upon which continued growth depended. Long regarded as the leader of the conservative Francophone states in Africa, Houphouët-Boigny was often able to use his old R.D.A. connections in other states to ensure the support if not always the loyalty of their leaders. Where party connections were not enough he might urge the French authorities to apply discreet but firm pressure to secure the desired result.

The prestige of the Senegalese leader, Leopold Senghor, was perhaps greater outside Africa, particularly in the French National Assembly where his contributions on constitutional matters were much appreciated, not least because of his legal expertise and his emphasis on France's continuing role in Africa. And this notwithstanding his support for various liberal measures intended to secure the civil and political rights of Africans and meant to prepare the African territories for an early independence. Inside Senegal his authority was secure, although the spectacle of a devout Catholic at the head of a predominantly Moslem population was a subject of much comment elsewhere. Outside Senegal, however, Senghor lacked the extensive party base and the inter-territorial organisation of his main French-speaking rival, Houphouët-Boigny. His own party, the Overseas Independents (I.O.M.),

was without mass support in Africa and functioned primarily as a Paris-based pressure group. <sup>17/</sup> Senghor was accustomed to lead but, relying as he did on verbal skills and intellectual argument, he was less successful than his rivals in creating a direct popular following for himself or in giving stable institutional form to his many and overlapping personal networks - based on ties of friendship, language and intellectual affinity.

On the major issues arising before independence Senghor was fairly consistently out-manoeuvred by the Ivory Coast leader whose conservative outlook and francophile views, whose voluntary collaboration with the colonial administration, whose apparent lack of enthusiasm for African independence, were all much closer to the mood of successive French governments after 1956. It was as a member of the predominantly Socialist government, in 1956, that Houphouët-Boigny helped draft the loi-cadre which conceded a broad measure of autonomy to the territories comprising French West and Equatorial Africa, thus hastening the ultimate demise of the parent federations. Senghor had opposed the loi-cadre and, as the pace of decolonisation quickened after Ghana's independence in 1957, he made a strong and determined bid to reverse the trend to 'fragmentation' in West Africa and to work instead for the independence of the Federation as a whole. A new political coalition, the Party for African Re-grouping (P.R.A.), was formed in Dakar, in March 1958, with support from a number of R.D.A. leaders, including Sékou Touré, who were opposed to what they described as the 'balkanisation' of Africa. <sup>18/</sup>

When it seemed, however, that Houphouët-Boigny might yet be defeated on this crucial issue, Senghor lost one of his major allies and the coalition began to fragment. Touré's uncompromising decision to opt for immediate

independence in 1958 not only eliminated one of the more outspoken advocates of Federation but also removed one of the Federation's more affluent members, making it that much less attractive to the others. Senghor nevertheless persisted with his proposal - this time for a Mali Federation based on existing road and rail links between coastal Senegal and the land-locked states to the East, and on the social and economic ties that united the various peoples of the Sahel. He presented the Federation as the one means by which member-states might achieve an early independence without risking - as in the case of Guinea - diplomatic and financial isolation. However, when three other West African states - the Soudan, Upper Volta and Dahomey - attended the exploratory meeting, held in Bamako in December 1958, to consider the structure of the future Federation, Houphouët-Boigny again intervened, offering his Francophone neighbours what he described as inter-African "ties of solidarity in the domains of justice, civil service, labour, public health, and tariffs in a conseil d'entente." <sup>19/</sup> Where he had once attacked the Federation for diverting his country's resources to other and less deserving causes, he was now ready to share those same resources with any who would identify with the proposed Entente. Even this condition was made less onerous by the loose and flexible nature of the Entente's political and economic arrangements, where the Mali Federation, by its very nature, could not operate without some delegation of sovereign powers on the part of its constituents.

The appeal of the Mali Federation, as Houphouët-Boigny rightly perceived when he sought to counteract it, lay in the material and political advantages that it offered rather than in any sentimental attachment to the former Federation or to the ideal of African unity. Neighbouring Soudan was dependent on Senegal for access to the sea and, consequently, for much

of its trade and most of its communications. Upper Volta was seeking economic advantage from whatever source but was anxious, too, to decrease its traditional dependence on the Ivory Coast. West African unity also had attractions for Dahomey whose large surplus of educated cadres had traditionally found employment within the Federation and at Dakar. While the old Federation might have been costly, inefficient and remote from the majority of its constituents, political independence for many of the West African territories would simply mean increased isolation and even greater economic dependence on France. Where Senegal and the Ivory Coast could go it alone, the impoverished states of the Sahel could not, and cannot now, afford to be left out of any viable grouping of West African states, which is why they are members of so many of the inter-state organisations active in the region.

Where Touré and Nkrumah had failed to persuade President Tubman that Liberia should join forces with them, so too Mauritania withheld its support from the Mali Federation, even accusing its leaders of encouraging a secessionist movement in the Senegal River Valley.<sup>20/</sup> It was Senegal and the Soudan who finally combined in January 1959 to form the Mali Federation, intended by Senghor as the nucleus of a much wider grouping of the Francophone states within the region. The Federation, which received its independence in June 1960, was structured so that the leaders of Senegal and the Soudan became the president and prime minister, respectively, of the new state. Unfortunately, the two constituents failed to cooperate either before or, more particularly, after independence : partly because of national rivalry, partly because the ideologies of the two ruling parties were scarcely compatible, and partly because of the marked discrepancy in their levels of social and economic development. The Soudanese soon came

to resent the dominant position of Senegal which they believed was working to their disadvantage.

As the example of the Entente also shows, inter-dependence, especially between land-locked and coastal states, is as likely to produce tension and conflict as it is to promote integration. And the disadvantages of operating a two-member federation, whose units are at different levels of development, and whose leaders subscribe to opposing economic doctrines, are likely to off-set any advantages to be derived from complementarity. Even their respective size and scale and their geographical location made Senegal and Mali an ill-assorted pair, despite their common border. The Federation broke up within eighteen months of its formation and two months after receiving independence. Its collapse re-kindled old antagonisms within the region and left a residue of animosity between the two former partners that persisted long afterwards.

The Federation would probably not have lasted in any case as the prospect of an early independence with continuing French aid, which was widely seen as one of its most attractive features, was soon available to all who requested it and on even better financial terms. The French, having conceded independence to the new Mali Federation within the Franco-African Community and without loss of economic privileges, then came under immediate and strong pressure from members of the Entente to agree a similar but even more favourable package. Houphouët-Boigny's success in extracting from the French the offer of independence for members of the Entente, with improved financial aid and without the irksome restrictions imposed by membership of the Community, coincided with the final collapse of the Mali Federation.

More important, it marked the effective end of the Community as a viable entity. There was no longer any incentive for African states to join and with the French unable to exercise their former prerogatives in the matters of defence, foreign policy and financial affairs, the Community likewise lost most of its appeal for Paris.<sup>22/</sup>

Meanwhile the Council of the Entente, originally conceived as the Union du Benin-Sahel but with more limited objectives, was established on May 29, 1959. Houphouët-Boigny was the moving figure behind the alliance which was organised primarily to counteract the influence of the rival Ghana-Guinea Union. The Entente constituted a kind of wedge separating the two radical states and adding a territorial dimension to the French programme of sanctions designed to achieve much the same end. Eventually its members would not only form a cordon sanitaire around Ghana but would also be well placed to offer moral support and material incentives to those Francophone states most receptive to economic and political penetration from Africa's most populous state, Nigeria.

In any case the Entente quickly outgrew its origins and evolved into a flexible, multi-purpose grouping well adapted for a variety of roles, usually defensive and designed to safeguard the stability of the sub-region and the prosperity of its leading member, the Ivory Coast.<sup>23/</sup> There was the need, firstly, to protect and secure the area's ties with France threatened by the dissidence of Guinea and her subsequent alliance with Ghana. It was also important to minimise and contain the unwelcome pressures arising from Guinea's independence and her radical policies - in a region already receptive to the progressive ideas generated by the Algerian war and by the nationalist movements in Ghana and Nigeria. Even more urgent was the need to counter the threat to the economic well-being of the Ivory Coast, and



in particular her ties with Upper Volta, posed by the expansionist designs of the Mali Federation on the one hand, and Nkrumah's projected Union of African States on the other. Certainly the Ivory Coast would not again accept a subordinate position in Francophone West Africa, where Senegal was likely to remain her most serious competitor.

Finally, Guinea's defection had further weakened the cohesion of the Francophone states as they were about to confront the challenge from an independent and strong, even if a politically unstable, Nigeria. The Entente was intended to remedy that weakness, and off-set the undoubted attractions of the Nigerian market for her Francophone neighbours. Nigeria's large land area, her active and resourceful population, her agricultural surpluses, her largely untapped mineral wealth and her enormous oil potential, scarcely realised at independence in 1960, already made her, within West Africa, the major potential rival to any Francophone grouping or individual country. Where the threat to the Ivory Coast from Ghana and Guinea was political and ideological in character but with possible adverse consequences for stability and economic growth within the Entente, the challenge from Nigeria was primarily economic, impossible to isolate, more difficult to contain, and, given a stable administration and effective government in Lagos, was destined not only to persist but also to grow.

The inspiration for the Entente was (and remains) largely political in character. Above all there was the need to safeguard the Ivory Coast's much vaunted economic "miracle" by maintaining the flow of French and overseas investment while at the same time securing the annual influx of cheap immigrant labour from the land-locked states to the North, particularly Upper

Volta, and the desire for other West African states to join his proposed Mali Federation.<sup>24/</sup> But, in the short term at least, it was Ghana's expansionist policy, under Nkrumah, that posed the most serious threat to the Ivory Coast and to the political stability on which foreign investment depended. The Entente attempted, therefore, to turn Ghana's flank by including within the grouping Niger, on her northern frontier, and later, in 1965, her eastern neighbour, Togo. Niger, whose leader, Hamani Diori, was a close friend of Houphouët-Boigny and an old collaborator in the R.D.A., also provided the essential link with Dahomey, the remaining member of the Entente. Their inclusion in the alliance may also have been intended, as we have suggested, to counter the obvious economic attractions for these Francophone states of their formidable, English-speaking neighbour, Nigeria. If that was indeed the object then the Entente was much less successful in that direction.

Although its formation was the result of political factors, the Entente has nevertheless operated primarily as an economic sub-regional grouping. It owes its survival mainly to the continuing prosperity of the Ivory Coast and its own redistributive mechanisms, notably the Fonds du Solidarité (Solidarity Fund), whereby member-states can share in the surplus generated by their more successful partner, without themselves making more than a token contribution. By contrast, the political arrangements are extremely flexible. The Entente was "fashioned in conformity with the principles [Houphouët-Boigny] had expressed in drafting the Loi-cadre."<sup>25/</sup> From the outset he was opposed to the creation of any supra-national organisation and insisted instead on maintaining the autonomy

of each member state. Decisions, taken by the Heads of State or their representatives, had to be unanimous, while membership was voluntary, based largely on economic self-interest, and confined to the Francophone states. Houphouët-Boigny stressed the need for close relations with France and hoped for some coordination of his partners' foreign policies.

Member states declined, however, to adopt common political institutions or to harmonise their constitutional arrangements as originally proposed. The Community Court, intended to arbitrate disputes involving members, was not set up. Even Houphouët-Boigny's ambitious proposals for dual nationality, which seemed to offer greater security to the large immigrant populations of the Ivory Coast, had to be abandoned in 1966 after growing opposition from the ruling party there. <sup>26/</sup> It was initially expected that the Entente would form a customs union and that policies on financial affairs, labour, the civil service, health, public works and telecommunications would soon be harmonised. By the mid-'sixties, however, the customs union had failed to materialise and it had become increasingly difficult to formulate common policies even in the technical domain. <sup>27/</sup>

Indeed, the very social and economic ties that bound the Ivory Coast to its partners, were themselves a frequent source of serious discord. The land-locked states resented their dependence on the transit facilities accorded them by the more prosperous coastal states and at a price they considered exorbitant. Moreover, it was their immigrant populations that helped maintain the high levels of production in the Ivory Coast and elsewhere in the South, and yet the same immigrants were vulnerable to

occasional outbursts of xenophobia and violence, particularly in periods of economic stagnation and depression. Nor was this confined to migrant labour from the Sahel. Skilled and white collar workers and traders from other coastal states were equally liable to sudden and seemingly arbitrary reprisals, including confiscation of their goods, occupation of their premises and sometimes expulsion. Even before independence, riots in Abidjan, the capital of the Ivory Coast, in October 1958, had led to the sudden departure of large numbers of Dahomeans and Togolese employed there. Such incidents created tensions between the respective governments and an atmosphere of mutual recrimination that would persist for years inhibiting any chance of political or economic grouping or cooperation at a sub-regional (or regional) level.

While the major colonial languages may have made it easier for independent governments to communicate with one another - across much of West Africa and, indeed, at the continental level - they also created fairly rigid linguistic barriers, particularly between the French and English speaking states. Fortunately, in West Africa, this barrier was breached quite early by the 'union' of Guinea and Ghana, based on personal affinity between their respective leaders and ideological compatibility. Unfortunately, that same union would soon provoke other, more damaging divisions, this time largely ideological in character and by no means confined to West Africa. Although the ideological confrontation began at last to recede in 1963, the quarrels in West Africa resulting from Guinea's initial break with France would nevertheless persist, rooted as they were not only in differences of ideology among the Francophone leaders, but also in their contrasting personalities and temperaments, and in rivalries that had their origins in the nationalist movement itself.

As the leading Francophone states in West Africa, the Ivory Coast and Senegal were also those most directly affected by Guinea's independence and her subsequent alliance with Ghana. The Ivory Coast borders on Guinea, Ghana and the Soudan (Mali), all of whom would be associated with Nkrumah's Union of African States. Moreover, the Ivory Coast and Guinea also shared a history of political agitation in the R.D.A. where, however, their collaboration had become increasingly strained as Touré, Houphouët-Boigny's protégé, had remained loyal to the party's early militant and radical traditions long after his patron had abandoned them in the interests of his country's stability, recognition of his party by the French, and concessions in the direction of internal autonomy and greater decentralisation within the West African Federation. It was on the question of the Federation and its future that Touré had finally parted company with his older and more conservative colleague. Where Houphouët-Boigny saw the Federation as inhibiting his country's otherwise spectacular economic growth, Touré had criticised the loi-cadre as promoting "balkanisation" and perpetuating French rule and influence. Until the eve of Guinea's independence in 1958, Touré had campaigned vigorously for a re-organised and independent Federation grouping the Francophone states of the region.

Touré's defiant stand in 1958 therefore removed one of the strongest supporters of Federation and greatly strengthened those, including Houphouët-Boigny, working for a separate autonomy for each of the constituent territories. But Houphouët-Boigny could not be expected to approve a hastily improvised independence that promised poverty rather than riches, threatened the region's close ties with France and the prospect of further French and Western investment; an independence, moreover, that endangered

Houphouët-Boigny's country's relations with neighbouring states like Upper Volta, whose surplus of cheap, unskilled labour was, as we have seen, a major factor, along with diversification and foreign investment, in the Ivory Coast's rapid economic development. To Houphouët-Boigny, the independence of Guinea seemed at once to threaten both the stability of the region and the new-found prosperity of his country.

Senghor, the Senegalese leader, who had remained outside the RDA and considered himself a socialist, was nevertheless among the first of the African leaders to campaign for independence and an end to colonial rule. This made it all the more difficult for him to condemn Touré's decision - although Guinea's independence probably removed the last remaining chance for the creation of the strong and independent West African Federation to which Senghor and Senegal were wholly committed. Senghor nevertheless differed from Touré in insisting that independence could only be real in the context of an interdependence, both political and economic, which involved 'meaningful' cooperation between the European nations, or 'northern neighbours', and the 'southern' or African countries.<sup>28/</sup> This was the very antithesis of the position defended by Sékou Touré, in 1958 and afterwards, and by Nkrumah in his later writings on "neo-colonialism". But, for Senghor, effective cooperation was possible only between independent states. Hence the tenor and direction of his political activities in the 'fifties and his opposition to colonial rule which made him increasingly suspect - not only to the French fighting a long, expensive and ultimately inconclusive war against the Algerian nationalists, but to those on the other side who could not appreciate his complex motivation or his continued identification with France.

The key to Senghor's behaviour was his determination to avoid any rupture between Africa on the one hand, and Europe - particularly France - on the other. Otherwise his twin aims in the region were an early independence for Senegal and the remaining Francophone states, and the prompt reconstitution of the old West African Federation which had done much to promote Senegal's economy and to guarantee her long predominance within French West Africa. Like Houphouët-Boigny, Senghor had no wish to take independence without a guarantee of continuing French economic and political support. Otherwise, he maintained, Senegal and her neighbours could have at best only an artificial independence. But, unlike Houphouët-Boigny, Senghor had every reason to support a revival of the Federation, in decline throughout the 'fifties, if only because of the obvious advantages that accrued to Senegal in the form of investment, industrialisation, and infrastructure - to say nothing of prestige.

By the late 'fifties the desire for independence was already strong in many of the French West African territories - influenced by the example of independent Ghana and later Nigeria in the East, and of Tunisia and Morocco to the North, and by the intellectual ferment resulting from the Algerian insurrection and from Guinea's bold gesture in 1958. Senghor may have felt the need to act promptly to neutralise such pressures which could otherwise be exploited by his - and France's - opponents within the region. An independent Federation of French-speaking West African states, participating, alongside France, in a Community of independent and autonomous states seemed to offer the best opportunity for securing existing links between the two continents and for promoting the idea of Eurafrique.<sup>29/</sup> The refusal of the French, in 1958, to concede independence as distinct

from autonomy, led to the sudden withdrawal of Guinea, undermined Senghor's original design for a large and comprehensive Mali Federation, and was a cause of continuing dissatisfaction within the Franco-African Community. It certainly contributed to the failure of both schemes and to the subsequent tensions within the sub-region.

Despite these setbacks, Senghor would continue to promote regroupment at all levels from the sub-regional to the inter-continental and, in the 'sixties at least, was more sympathetic to cooperation across linguistic lines than his conservative colleague in the Ivory Coast who increasingly saw himself as the natural leader of the Francophone forces in Africa. While both leaders worked to promote Francophone unity, Senghor was more concerned than Houphouët-Boigny to improve relations with his immediate neighbours, Guinea and Mali, and to secure their reconciliation with France and the surrounding Francophone states.<sup>30/</sup> Senghor's problems with the Gambia, an English-speaking enclave surrounded by Senegal with independent access to the Atlantic, no doubt also influenced his views and may have made him more receptive to the idea of a bi-lingual community - not unlike the Cameroon - joining Senegal and the Gambia in the first instance and, ultimately, all the states of West Africa.

Meanwhile Bouphouët-Boigny's energies were directed, instead, to the consolidation of the Entente and the continued and enforced isolation of Ghana, Guinea and their allies within the region, and to the extension of OCAM to include former Belgian (but French-speaking) states like Congo-Kinshasa (Zaire) and Ruanda. Given a favourable opportunity



and a government in Paris sympathetic to the idea, he was even prepared to attempt the dismemberment of Nigeria, which he saw increasingly as the real political and economic threat to the Francophone countries of the region and to the Ivory Coast, the Francophone "shop-window" of West Africa.

Guinea, the other key French-speaking state in the region, and, like Senegal and the Ivory Coast, linking coast with hinterland, would appear to have been a willing and likely partner in any scheme for regional integration : if only because of its isolation after 1958, its exclusion from the Francophone community, its early dependence on the generosity and support of others within Africa, and its vast mineral reserves - but with insufficient capital to secure their effective exploitation. While, for geographical reasons alone, the cooperation of Guinea and its President, Sékou Touré, was vital to the success of such a scheme, this should have presented no great problem as Touré was, himself, a staunch Pan-Africanist. Moreover, his position as President and head of the ruling party in Guinea, the PDG, was unique and unassailable, the more so as he placed his personal talents and undoubted popularity at the disposal of the party he had founded, thereby providing a solid institutional base for his regime.

Cooperation between Touré and his Francophone colleagues and neighbours was, however, extremely difficult to achieve, not least because of his pronounced anti-French and anti-imperialist views and his determined and relentless opposition to "neo-colonialism". After 1958 Touré would remain steadfast in defending the dignity of his people and his country's independence. His Francophone neighbours were often criticised in the harshest language for their close ties with France and their failure to adopt radical postures on a variety of important issues. The outcome of all this was that, while Guinea occasionally enjoyed "normal" relations with either Senegal

or the Ivory Coast, after 1958 she was seldom on good terms with both and for much of the time their relations were hostile, poor, or non-existent. The real rapprochement only came in 1980, some twenty-two years after independence, and thanks to the efforts of various African leaders in the region who had worked hard towards this much needed reconciliation.

Although the first years of independence were dominated by the debate about African unity, circumstances were not conducive to political or economic cooperation within the region as a whole. The West African states and their leaders were deeply involved in the main issues of the day - Algeria, and soon the Congo and Morocco's claims on Mauritania - but on opposing sides. The division between French and English-speaking states, inherited from the colonial rulers, was complicated by rival alliances that straddled the linguistic barrier and were largely ideological. Economic nationalism and political rivalry were soon so pronounced as to afford little opportunity for serious consideration of the region's long-term development and of the economic strategies and political arrangements from which all might have benefitted. Indeed, economic issues were temporarily overshadowed by what seemed, at the time, more immediate and more urgent political considerations. Until this imbalance in priorities was corrected, until the various quarrels were resolved or mechanisms devised to limit their effects, and until the linguistic and ideological divisions were somehow surmounted, governmental policies and planning could not begin to reflect a regional dimension. But a start had been made and the seed of later sub-regional, regional and continental groupings had been sown. It only remained for West African leaders to water the seed, tend the seedling, and encourage its growth to full maturity and final fruition.

# REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

1. C. Hoskyns, 'Pan-Africanism and Integration', in Hazlewood, A (ed.) African Integration and Disintegration, p.368.
2. Quoted in C.Chime, Integration and Politics among African States, p.141.
3. Hoskyns, p.341.
4. "Though considerable caution was shown about any quick move to formal unity or any sacrifice of sovereignty...." Hoskyns, p.341. "There is evidence to suggest that the Ghanaians had been somewhat disappointed by the mildness of the CIAS resolutions and they let it be known that they would not oppose the adoption of more radical resolutions when the AAPC met." Hoskyns, p.362.
5. Hoskyns, p.363.
6. Those invited ranged from the National Liberation Front (FLN) of Algeria to the South African (mainly white) Liberal Party. The NPC, the leading party in Nigeria at the federal level, did not attend but other Nigerian parties did. Hoskyns, p.362.
7. Hoskyns, pp.362-3.
8. "Better to implement the resolutions, Ghana and Guinea more or less took charge of the AAPC and began rather clumsily to try to involve the other independent states in a West African union." Hoskyns, p.363.
9. T.P.Melady, Profiles of African Leaders, p.109.
10. Chime, p.154.
11. Chime, p.157
12. Chime, p.158.
13. An important initiative by the CIAS in 1958 was the creation of the African group at the United Nations. "The CIAS continued to function fairly successfully until 1960 when, in spite of its loose structure, it was unable to absorb the newly independent French African states with their very different points of view. By 1962, when its third conference should have been held, other organisations had been formed to take its place." Hoskyns, p.361.
14. Hoskyns, p.364.
15. Chime, p.155.
16. At independence in 1957 Ghana had opted out of the West African Frontier Force, the West African Airways Corporation, the West African Currency Board, and the West African Shipping Lines. The only functional organisation to survive was the West African Examination Council.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont.

17. V.Thompson, West Africa's Council of the Entente, p.xviii.
18. Thompson, pp.xviii-xix.
19. Thompson, p.xxi.
20. Thompson, p.35.
21. "M. Houphouët-Boigny rencontre donc le général de Gaulle le 1<sup>er</sup> juin. A ce moment son état d'esprit ne peut faire de droite : il doit se montrer plus radical que M.M.Senghor et Keita s'il veut avoir une chance de rétablir son prestige en Afrique." J. Baulin, La Politique Africaine d'Houphouët-Boigny, p.132.
22. There is an account of these developments in R. Bourgi, Le General de Gaulle et l'Afrique Noire, 1940-1969, pp.351-371.
23. Thompson provides an account of the Entente and its creation. Thompson, pp.32-52.
24. Thompson, p.xx.
25. Thompson, p.32.
26. 'Double nationality' adopted by the Entente leaders in December 1965 (Le Monde, 1 January 1966); shelved by Houphouët-Boigny (Le Monde, 9 June 1966.)
27. Thompson, p.33.
28. T.P.Melady, p.77.
29. Bourgi, pp.335-7.
30. Le Monde, 10 December 1966 and 19 January 1967.

CHAPTER 3CONTINUING SEARCH FOR COOPERATION IN WEST AFRICA :  
1960-65

Sub-regional groupings like the Ghana-Guinea Union and its competitors were soon to be overtaken by events that seemed to favour the organisation of wider continental-type alliances - wherein the leading West African protagonists nevertheless continued to play the major role. This new trend reflected the rivalries inevitable among an already large and quickly growing body of independent African rulers, whose divisions were aggravated by the great disparities in size, wealth and cohesion of the units they administered. There was the continuing problem of political instability and the consequent risk of external intervention - whether from other African states or from non-African powers. The new patterns of alliance in the early 'sixties evolved out of a series of distinct but overlapping issues, involving French-administered or, in the case of the former Belgian Congo, French-speaking states. They included the protracted struggle for Algerian independence : the claim by Morocco to a substantial part of Mauritania, hitherto administered by France but now to receive independence along with the other French West African territories; and the chaotic aftermath of Belgian colonial administration in Congo-Léopoldville (later Congo-Kinshasa and finally Zaire).

These problems, confined as they were to various parts of Africa, nevertheless raised issues of more general and more immediate concern that affected not only individual African states but the future of the continent as a whole. They included not only the pace and manner of de-colonisation; or

the independence, sovereignty and frontiers of the new states, but also their relations with one another, and their place within the international system. Ideology served not only to aggravate but also to perpetuate the divisions : it soon led to the emergence of rival coalitions while the issues themselves assumed such importance as to rule out any possibility of an early compromise. By the end of 1960 even the more radical Pan-Africanists were ready to abandon the principle of 'universality' in favour of some degree of 'exclusiveness' as they moved towards the creation of "frankly partial organisations" <sup>1/</sup> with, hopefully, common objectives and a shared ideology. Ghana, Guinea, Mali and their North African allies abandoned the search for a *modus vivendi* with the moderate and conservative West African leaders and tried instead to form a smaller, more cohesive group that could act effectively and promptly at all levels to realise the aims of its members.

The result was the Casablanca bloc of states, formed in January 1961, continental in outlook but selective in membership. <sup>2/</sup> If ideology was the major factor in the creation of the group, its small and dispersed membership, and their often contrasting interests and conflicting priorities, would later become a serious disadvantage. For the moment, however, and on the major issues the lines were already clearly drawn. On the Congo the Casablanca states favoured Patrice Lumumba, the Prime Minister, who wanted to terminate Katangan secession by the use of force and who was openly sympathetic to Nkrumah's Pan-African proposals - just as they opposed the conservative President, Joseph Kasavubu, who supported more conciliatory policies, clashed frequently with Lumumba and finally dismissed him. On North Africa the Casablanca group favoured unconditional and immediate French withdrawal from Algeria and were sympathetic to Morocco's territorial

claim on Mauritania. At the same time they subscribed to the principle of African political union and the creation of an Africa High Command. <sup>3/</sup>

Such an aggressive stance soon aroused the opposition of most of the moderate African states, both French- and English-speaking, whose numbers were swollen by rapid de-colonisation at the beginning of the 'sixties. Indeed, the decision to proceed with the formation of the Casablanca group was itself a major political blunder as the radical leaders thereby assumed the responsibility for splitting Africa and at the same time advertised both their isolation and their numerical inferiority. Most African states were already moving quickly to a position where they recognised existing frontiers as the only valid ones, rejected force as a means of settling inter-African disputes, and insisted that any future community of African states must be based on respect for the sovereignty and integrity of its individual members. Hence their support for President Kasavubu in the Congo, their reluctance to sanction the use of force as long as there remained any prospect of a negotiated settlement, and their rejection of intervention other than by forces acting under the UN and with the approval of the Security Council.

#### The Brazzaville Group

Whereas the Casablanca bloc, in organisational as well as in ideological terms, represented a new and radical departure from previous patterns of African organisation, it was at a distinct disadvantage in competing with the more 'conservative' Francophone states who had behind

them a long tradition and experience of administrative integration and political cooperation, albeit at a regional rather than a continental level. Given their shared colonial background, common language and similar formation, most of the black Francophone leaders were better placed at this time to operate effectively at a continental level than either their British counterparts, or the various radical states. Indeed, as the Casablanca states were planning their new organisation and attempting to concert their strategy, a corresponding movement among the black Francophone states was already far advanced.

#### From Brazzaville to Addis Ababa

The black Francophone states, unlike their more insular English-speaking counterparts in West Africa, had a long experience of centralised government under the French, with two separate colonial administrations integrated on a regional basis. <sup>4/</sup> While the trend in the 'fifties had been away from the large federal units represented by French West and Equatorial Africa, and towards the eventual independence of their many constituents, there remained after independence a substantial legacy of interdependence and cooperation and not just at the regional level. This was reinforced by inter-state arrangements such as the Franc zone, grouping most of West and Equatorial Africa as well as Madagascar, and the various stabilisation funds - although the latter were quickly phased out after independence. In West Africa, there was the West African Monetary Union (UMOA) with its common currency or CFA franc issued by the Central Bank of the West African States (BCEAO), and the much less successful West African Customs Union established in 1961 but on the basis of an earlier French



initiative of 1959. Political and economic cooperation among the independent Francophone States was further encouraged by French programmes of aid and technical assistance while new forms of cooperation were devised by the African states themselves after independence, one of the more profitable being Air Afrique, created in 1961 by some eleven Francophone states in conjunction with the two French airlines already operating there.

Despite the initial euphoria of independence, which was soon dissipated, there remained among the Francophone states a certain nostalgia for the old ties that had united them - at least on a regional basis - under colonial rule. As Senghor later explained:

One always feels a certain nostalgia for a community.  
/Which is why/ all the states of the former French  
West and French Equatorial Africa continue to feel a  
sense of nostalgia for the old federation [and why] such  
sentiments play an important part in our proposal for  
a Francophone Community.

5/

But the major reason for heightened cooperation and improved inter-state organisation was, at least initially, defensive in character. By reason of their small population and the paucity of their economic resources, most of the Francophone states were intensely vulnerable to political, economic and, on occasion, even military pressure. At the same time they were unable as individual states to influence events in Africa which - in Algeria as in the Congo, or the dispute over Mauritania - directly affected many of them. Felix Houphouët-Boigny expressed this view succinctly after one of his frequent meetings with General de Gaulle:

Everyone knows that small and weak states, when they are isolated, are likely to get rough justice in this harsh world. Not only does French aid enable us to develop but, thanks to it, we have a [new] sense of [our own] strength.

6/

Their continued attachment to France - attested to by the treaties of cooperation, and in some cases defence agreements, quickly negotiated and approved by the newly independent African governments - earned them the hostility of the more radical African states without, however, providing an unconditional guarantee of continuing French benevolence and military assistance if and when required. Indeed, the Francophone states were almost as concerned to secure their political and economic interests against those of the French Metropole as they were to defend their common frontiers against armed aggression from hostile neighbours. Already France's continuing economic integration within the EEC was threatening the privileged trading position of former African possessions and at a time of rapidly falling commodity and mineral prices and deteriorating terms of trade. Nor would it be long before France began to exercise a certain discretion in the choice of those African leaders whom it would support against their domestic opponents.

The French, for their part, were no less anxious to keep their commercial contacts and to expand their investments in Africa wherever possible - even beyond the old colonial frontiers. President de Gaulle, whose ties to Africa and its leaders were as much personal as political, attached particular importance to maintaining France's sphere of influence in black Africa, seeking to exclude rival powers and always ready, as in Congo-Leopoldville in 1960 and Nigeria in 1968, to try to extend French

influence at the expense of her West European partners and allies. In return for French assistance the Francophone states were also expected to give loyal, if not always an instinted, support to France in international and African councils, notably on matters closely affecting French economic and strategic interests. The French government was visibly upset, and General de Gaulle personally affronted, by Guinea's last minute defection from the projected Franco-African Community and her 'premature' independence. When a harsh and hastily improvised programme of economic and administrative sanctions failed to reverse the Guinean decision - and this may not have been its primary intention - the French hastily reviewed their own policy on Africa and conceded independence in June, 1960, to the recently formed Mali Federation without economic or financial penalty. They thereby removed a strong incentive for other black Francophone states to accept a limited autonomy within the Community.

Moreover, the break with Conakry in 1958 strengthened General de Gaulle's now legendary suspicions of British and American involvement in Africa, as in other areas of the world - apparently confirmed when the American government offered assistance to the new regime in Guinea - and his determination, reinforced by African pressure, particularly from the Ivory Coast, to contain the political 'contagion' unleashed by Ghana's independence and her subsequent alliance with Guinea. The French, along with most of the Francophone rulers in Africa, had every reason to oppose the policies of the Ghanaian leader : not least Nkrumah's socialist ideology and his growing ties with the East European and Communist states - although France was herself at this time actively promoting trade and other links with the same socialist states. But the main basis for French opposition was Nkrumah's hostility to the kind of cooperation that was such a central feature of France's policy in independent Africa, coupled with his support

for opposition or secessionist movements in several neighbouring and Francophone countries, including Togo, Ivory Coast and Niger, and his support for liberation movements in territories still under colonial and, in some cases, direct French control.

Developments in West and Central Africa after Ghana's independence were hardly reassuring to governments in Paris trying to secure French interests in those areas. Following the rapid disintegration of their former African federations and with the Franco-African Community still-born, they had also to contend with United Nations and American intervention in the Congo, with the internationalisation of the Algerian war and the rupture of diplomatic relations with Nigeria over the Saharan nuclear tests at the beginning of 1961. The French badly needed an African leader able to mount an effective counter-offensive and re-group the remnants of their former empire. In this connection it is significant that France's preferred ally in Africa was not to be Senegal, leader of the old West African Federation, but the Ivory Coast whose President, Houphouët-Boigny, was, like General de Gaulle himself, a nationalist of conservative political and religious views, but also a pragmatist, aware that only economic strength can confer a real independence and an effective and lasting influence in world affairs. Aware, too, that economic strength itself depends, in turn, on astute diplomacy abroad coupled with sound and efficient administration at home.

Already Houphouët-Boigny's privileged position as a member of the French government in 1956 had helped him in his campaign to dismantle the French West African Federation, wherein the Ivory Coast was but one constituent, important but both politically and economically subordinate to its major rival, Senegal. Again it was Houphouët-Boigny's determination to retain the

initiative and to outmanoeuvre his West African rivals that led him, in 1960, to demand unconditional independence for the members of his Entente - when he had previously shown no great enthusiasm for independence at all. It was Houphouët-Boigny, too, who later caused General de Gaulle considerable embarrassment by his refusal to lead his own country and his independent partners in the Entente back into the Franco-African Community in 1961. He himself had long expressed a clear preference for a more centralised community, federal in structure, but acknowledging French leadership. <sup>7/</sup> Worse, the Entente states subsequently refused a regional defence pact with France, although all except Upper Volta did finally conclude such an agreement in 1961. <sup>8/</sup> Houphouët-Boigny's economic and political demands on France likewise embarrassed the Gaullist government which, until 1962, had to confront a predominantly conservative and increasingly recalcitrant parliament opposed to further concessions anywhere in Africa.

Despite these tensions in the early 'sixties and the (probably inevitable) collapse of the Community experiment, there was a marked and continuing, if always partial, convergence of views between France and the Ivory Coast - based largely on mutual respect and a coincidence of economic and political interest. This had begun with the *loi-cadre* of 1956-57, for which Houphouët-Boigny had himself been largely responsible, and would persist for at least another two decades. Having once secured his country's autonomy within the West African Federation, having neutralised the implicit threat from the proposed Mali Federation, and having taken the Ivory Coast and its partners in the Entente, as independent states, out of the Franco-African Community, Houphouët-Boigny moved quickly and predictably to strengthen ties with the Metropole.

He welcomed French investment and administrative and technical assistance, while organising, as we have seen, an effective if small coalition of Francophone-states to counter the threat from his radical neighbours. His aim here coincided with several objectives of French presidential policy : to minimise the attractiveness of the Touré example in Guinea, and to contain the challenge from Ghana and, more recently, from Nigeria which had shown a surprising and unwelcome degree of independence - not so much by rejecting in 1961 the proposed Anglo-Nigerian Defence Treaty, which was of little immediate concern and no value to France anyway, but by severing diplomatic relations with France that same year, following the nuclear test programme in the Sahara, and by looking to her Francophone neighbours to demonstrate their solidarity. Houphouët-Boigny's success in organising the Entente, and thereby securing his own state's relative prosperity, was followed by his leading role in the Conference of Francophone States at Abidjan that preceded the formation of the Brazzaville Group in December 1960. In Paris he had long since been identified as one whose cooperation was indispensable to the success of French designs not only in West and Francophone Africa, but increasingly in Africa as a whole.

By comparison, Senghor's intellectual preoccupations, his democratic socialism, liberal Catholic views and international style and interests were less likely to recommend him to the French leadership after 1958. His more imaginative projects, particularly for a French-speaking Commonwealth or Community of independent states, may have struck a responsive chord among Gaullists and perhaps even with General de Gaulle himself, who would have grasped its potential utility but might not so readily have accepted its egalitarian implications, or the many commitments it could entail, still less the restrictions it would place on French intervention elsewhere in Africa.

Consequently, Senegal was at a distinct disadvantage compared with the Ivory Coast when it came to the economic inducements essential to successful coalition-building in Africa. Moreover, Senghor's relations with his immediate Francophone neighbours were always more difficult and less stable than in the case of the Ivory Coast and its partners, who formed a rather more homogeneous and somewhat more harmonious unit. Where radical pressures, both external and internal, helped cement the unity of the Entente, Senghor's likely partners included radicals like Touré and Keita, alongside the moderate, if progressive, President of Mauritania, Ould Daddah.

Where the Ivory Coast provides a natural focus for the activities of its neighbours to the North and particularly Upper Volta, the same cannot be said of Senegal. Mali, despite its rail link with Dakar, was too large and varied geographically not to experience the rival attractions of states to both North and South, while Mauritania continued its slow but steady evolution, begun in the last years of colonial rule, away from Senegal and black Africa and towards the Arabic-speaking North Africa. Even the unity of Senegal appeared somewhat precarious with the Gambia, an English-speaking enclave, driving an unwelcome wedge between Dakar, the capital, and the highly productive Casamance region in the far South of the country. <sup>9/</sup> Again, Senegal, with its predominantly Moslem population, and despite its Catholic leader, was thought in France to be vulnerable to influences from North Africa and the Middle East which were traditionally unsympathetic, if not hostile, to French interests. Thus the very factors that had once made Senegal the first object of French military attentions in West Africa, now operated to discourage further European commercial involvement. French

investors had little incentive to risk their capital here rather than in the Ivory Coast with its social and political stability, its largely non-Muslim and predominantly Catholic population, and its economic "miracle".

It was therefore under the auspices of the Ivory Coast that Francophone leaders gathered at Abidjan in October and agreed the agenda they would discuss at Brazzaville at the end of 1960. The Brazzaville group of twelve African states, which emerged from that conference, took shape the following March as the African and Malagasy Union (UAM). <sup>10/</sup> It rejected force as a possible solution to Africa's problems and recommended instead dialogue and conciliation. On the major issues, Algeria, Mauritania and the Congo, this seemed to place them in clear opposition to the radical states, just as their conception of inter-African cooperation was initially far removed from the kind of unity that the radical states wished to see imposed.

The third grouping formed shortly afterwards, in May 1961, was that associated with the Liberian capital, Monrovia, and the country's President, William Tubman. <sup>11/</sup> Presidents Houphouët-Boigny and Senghor were also closely involved in the preparations and, to some extent, Monrovia appeared mainly as an extension of the Brazzaville group among the moderate non-French-speaking states, including Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ethiopia, making a total of twenty out of a total of twenty-seven independent African states. The aim seems to have been to create the broadest possible coalition of moderate states on what seemed the most favourable terrain. The radical states preferred to boycott the conference which nevertheless marked a turning point in the fortunes of the rival blocs : after Monrovia the Casablanca states were clearly on the defensive, while the Francophone states emerged for the moment as the largest and most cohesive force in African politics.



Monrovia also marked the entry by an independent Nigeria onto the expanding African scene. At Independence, in October 1960, the first Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, had been quick to see and appreciate the importance of Nigeria in the new scheme of things.

We must realise that Nigeria is emerging into a difficult world, a world in which as the country of the African Continent having by far the largest population, we shall inevitably occupy an important position the moment we become independent. A country of thirty-five million people is bound to exert a powerful influence, especially in its own part of the world. Our slightest act, our every word, will have repercussions among our neighbours and I am confident that Nigeria will prove to be a stabilising force in Africa and that our example will induce conditions favourable to orderly progress and development.

12/

Shortly afterwards Nigeria would engage in diplomatic efforts to find an acceptable compromise solution to Africa's political, economic, social and cultural problems. Having supported President Tubman's initiative at Monrovia, Nigeria made another attempt to bring the two opposing African blocs together - in Lagos in January 1962.<sup>13/</sup> The conference was intended to be a Pan-African gesture bridging once and for all the ideological divide. However, the Casablanca states again declined to attend citing as a pretext the absence of any invitation to the Provisional Government of Algeria - which had yet to gain its independence - while Morocco complained of the presence of a delegation from independent Mauritania. This was another serious error on their part as it was at the Lagos meeting that an African Charter was approved and subsequently ratified by member states. Much of this Charter was later incorporated into that of the OAU.

Support for a summit conference of all independent African states quickly gained ground during 1962, particularly as the disputes over Algeria,

the Congo and Mauritania died away. The Francophone states of the UAM had no further objection to a continental organisation provided its charter embraced the principles of sovereign equality and non-interference. The Casablanca states could no longer be said to constitute a cohesive bloc while Guinea and Mali were moving towards an early accommodation with the moderate majority. Ghana was isolated and increasingly beset by domestic problems, both political and economic, while the initiative had passed to the Francophone and other moderate leaders. Indeed, agreement among the Francophone states and their support for a conference of Heads of States now seemed essential to the success of the enterprise. Hence the active role played by "third parties" like the Nigerian Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, and the Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie, in promoting reconciliation among the '*frères ennemis*'. The President of the Ivory Coast himself was engaged in constructive talks with both Sékou Touré and Modibo Keita at the end of 1962. <sup>14/</sup>

In May 1963, the Conference of African Heads of State and Government opened in Addis Ababa and finally agreed a Charter for the Organisation of African Unity. The Nigerian Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, was particularly prominent in the proceedings, acting as spokesman for the signatories of the Lagos Charter, while continuing to work towards the consensus that had narrowly eluded him at the earlier Lagos meeting - and in circumstances that were now much more propitious. He observed that:

It has always been our view in Nigeria that personal contacts, and the exchange of ideas are the basis of mutual understanding. I am pleased that, from now on, there will be no question of the so-called Monrovia and Casablanca blocs. We all belong to Africa.

Nkrumah's proposals for a Union Government of African States failed this time to win open and unequivocal support even from the other Casablanca leaders. Instead, the conference listened sympathetically as the Nigerian leader reiterated the views of his country - which were also those of the great majority at Addis Ababa:

Nigeria's stand is that, if we want unity in Africa, we must first agree to certain essential things. The first is that African States must respect one another. There must be acceptance of equality by all the States. No matter whether they are big or small, they are all sovereign and their sovereignty is sovereignty.

15/

African unity could only be achieved, he maintained, by taking practical steps in economic, educational, scientific and cultural cooperation and by:

..... trying to get the Africans to understand themselves before embarking on the more complicated and more difficult arrangement of political union. My country stands for the practical approach to the unity of the African continent. We feel that, if this unity is to last, we must start from the beginning.

15/

He considered Nkrumah's proposal for the creation of an African Common Market as "a very good idea but I must say that we in Nigeria feel it is a very complicated matter." While a Common Market would be "good for the trade of Africa" it was clear from his remarks that he preferred to start with regional rather than continental economic groupings. He was pragmatic in his approach opting for functional integration and gradualism, and it was this policy that subsequent Nigerian leaders have continued. Sir Abubakar went out of his way to reassure all African states, large and small,

of Nigeria's recognition of their sovereignty and equality. In an obvious reference to Ghana he warned that they could not achieve African unity "as long as some African countries continue to carry on subversive activities in other African countries." <sup>15/</sup>

Significantly, Sir Abubakar's cautious and conciliatory approach won the support not only of the Monrovia states but also of members of the Casablanca group - as President Nasser of the United Arab Republic joined more conservative Francophone leaders like Senghor, Bourguiba of Tunisia, and Tsiranana of Madagascar, in advising against haste and warning that "African unity cannot be achieved overnight". President Julius Nyerere of Tanganyika (later Tanzania) also spoke in favour of the "step-by-step" approach to unity. Thus the debate about African unity increasingly became a debate about the virtues of regional economic cooperation which most speakers now saw as offering the best prospects for the development of the continent.

From Addis Ababa (1963) to Accra (1965)

With the creation of the OAU it was widely assumed that the various continental groupings, Casablanca, Monrovia and Brazzaville (or UAM) would be quickly dissolved as the interests of their members could now be accommodated within the framework of the new body. The first two readily complied - indeed, the Casablanca Bloc had begun to disintegrate long before the Addis Ababa conference. The Francophone states continued, however, to debate whether or not to maintain their separate organisation, or confine it strictly to economic, technical and cultural matters. Sékou Touré first raised the matter in May 1963, when he recommended the dissolution

of the UAM in conformity with the views of the African majority in the OAU. Then, as later, Houphouët-Boigny had shown himself determined to preserve the UAM intact as a separate platform, within Africa, for the articulation and defence of Francophone (and French) interests. <sup>16/</sup> Nor was this the last occasion on which the President of the Ivory Coast would find himself out of sympathy with a majority of the OAU : differences would arise later in connection with the Congo (Zaire) in 1964-5, Nigeria in 1968-9, and over the question of 'dialogue' with South Africa at the end of the decade.

It must have been obvious to Houphouët-Boigny that, in a body like the OAU, with such a large and varied membership, French influence was likely to be limited, while groupings such as the Entente and even the UAM would not carry the same weight as before, or command the same respect or enjoy the same degree of loyalty and cohesion. While the Francophone states were numerically strong and their leadership was fairly homogeneous, they were already beginning to diverge on a wide range of issues reflecting their different regional and national perspectives, while their relations with the former colonial power were far from uniform. This trend became even more pronounced once the ideological issues, that had helped maintain their cohesion at independence, started to recede after 1963. Houphouët-Boigny seems, nevertheless, to have concluded that cohesion could be more effectively maintained, and vital interests better protected, by retaining the smaller body with its restricted membership.

But for many Francophone states the UAM and its leadership were too closely identified either with French interests, or those of a particular region (West Africa), sub-region (that of the Entente), or state (Ivory Coast).

While some called for dissolution of the UAM, others would press for reform of its structures, modification of its functions and a more responsive and broad-based leadership. Even then the UAM could not be regarded, even by Francophone states, as a suitable or adequate substitute for the OAU which was recognised by the United Nations as the appropriate 'regional' agency and was supported by the totality of independent African states. The OAU thus had a legitimacy to which no other body, including the UAM, could ever aspire. Moreover, the OAU offered its members a more imposing platform, a wider range of options and greater discretion in the choice of allies. With the result that whereas, after 1960, the Casablanca states had operated at a clear disadvantage within the broad continental arena they had chosen, the UAM and its 'successors', while still influential after 1963 and a force to be reckoned with at all levels, were nevertheless clearly overshadowed by the larger, more comprehensive body created at Addis Ababa.

It was not surprising then that, on the question of retaining the UAM, Houphouët-Boigny should soon have found himself in a minority even among his Francophone colleagues. More remarkable, perhaps, were the misgivings openly expressed by several of his partners in the Entente, signalling a strong undercurrent of disaffection among the weaker states in that organisation - perhaps because their 'inflated' expectations of immediate and tangible benefits had so far been disappointed, perhaps because the Ivory Coast seemed to have its own reservations about the utility and effectiveness of the alliance. To the government in Abidjan the Entente now seemed too limited in scope, the allies too uncertain and infirm of purpose, and their combined population and resource base too narrow, to provide the kind of African platform that Houphouët-Boigny now required.<sup>17/</sup> Understandably, the other Entente leaders did not take kindly to the notion that they might be displaced by the UAM and relegated, albeit temporarily, to a subordinate status.

Even sympathetic critics, like the President of Upper Volta, Maurice Yaméogo, warned Houphouët-Boigny that UAM members would be even more vulnerable than before to the accusation that they were manipulated by, and subservient to, French interests. "It must be made clear that there can never again be two Africas, but only one, for which we must be ready to sacrifice everything." <sup>18/</sup> Hamani Diori, President of Niger, went even further than his colleague, maintaining that the Entente itself should be stripped of its political connotations in favour of the OAU. <sup>19/</sup> Other Francophone leaders, including President Mokhtar Ould Daddah of Mauritania, reminded Houphouët-Boigny that Addis Ababa had produced a very different situation where an exclusively Francophone body, particularly one with political objectives would inevitably be seen both as a rival to the OAU and even as a deliberate affront to the other African states. <sup>20/</sup> It would advance neither their interests nor those of France nor those of Africa as a whole. With its formal organisation and elaborate structures, which Houphouët-Boigny had initially opposed, and its political functions, which he supported, continuation of the UAM seemed scarcely compatible with a strong, effective OAU. Indeed, the Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs would soon describe the UAM as an "enterprise of sabotage".

The President of Senegal, Léopold Senghor, saw the dissolution of the UAM, where his principal rival had been so influential, as a means of strengthening his own position among the Francophone states and recovering some of his former influence. Even more important, it was also a prerequisite for the full resumption of trade and other links between Senegal and its immediate neighbours. Where Houphouët-Boigny had support from Madagascar, which insisted that it needed the UAM to overcome its insularity and compensate for its isolation from the African mainland, Senghor could

reply that continuation of the UAM in its present form would just as effectively isolate his country from the West African mainland. In the words of a Dakar correspondent : "If the UAM disappears Madagascar would once again become an island. If it does not ... it is Senegal ... that will become an island." <sup>21/</sup>

On the initiative of Senegal, preparations had been made, in 1963, for the establishment of a sub-regional organisation with strictly economic objectives, i.e. to sponsor development along the length of the Senegal River. This body, to be known after 1968 as the Organisation of States Bordering the Senegal River (OERS), would initially comprise Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, and Guinea. It would be financed in the first instance by a five million dollar grant from the *Fonds Spéciaux* of the United Nations, and, from the interest was seen by its prospective members as the nucleus of "a vast Common Market." <sup>22/</sup> The river development scheme offered Senegal the best prospects for early economic recovery and for a notable extension of her sphere of influence within the region. For states like Guinea and Mali there was the opportunity for resumption of normal trade and commerce and for reconciliation with their Francophone neighbours - and with France who alone could secure their ailing currencies and provide the necessary levels of aid and investment. Once realised, the new community promised some relief from their previous isolation and would effectively breach the *cordon sanitaire* erected by the Ivory Coast and her Entente partners. Guinea, however, insisted that it would sacrifice neither principles nor independence to achieve these otherwise desirable goals. Sékou Touré also seems to have warned Senghor that continuation of the UAM, in its present form and with its strong conservative bias, would debar his country from effective membership of the proposed sub-regional body. <sup>23/</sup>



Mali was more flexible since the break with France was not, in its case, complete, while Modibo Keita still hoped to negotiate favourable trade and transit arrangements with both Senegal and the Ivory Coast, while retaining his close political links with Conakry. Mauritania was also delicately placed, geographically - on the extreme north-western perimeter of black Africa. With her independence now secure, the country's leaders wanted closer ties with the Arab states to the North and, particularly, with socialist Algeria. They had no wish, therefore, to remain associated with an exclusively Francophone community with distinctly conservative connotations. Transformation of the UAM into an economic, technical and cultural agency would enable Mauritania to align itself progressively with the Maghreb countries, while membership of the OERS would serve not only to confirm the country's vocation as a bridge between black and Arab cultures, but would also help maintain the delicate internal balance between black and Berber communities.<sup>24/</sup>

These arguments were not calculated to appeal to the Ivory Coast leader who would have viewed them as so many additional reasons for retaining the UAM or even strengthening it. Houphouët-Boigny would have no wish to contribute to Senegal's economic recovery or witness the revival of its former influence within the region. Nor was he ready for a rapprochement with the leading radical states, whose activities on his frontiers he considered a threat to his regime. Where Senghor offered recognition to his radical neighbours to secure their political and economic cooperation, and offered to mediate on their behalf with France, Houphouët-Boigny continued instead to insist on the need for constant vigilance and effective counter-measures if the threat of revolution was to be contained. It was no part

of his policy that Guinea should emerge from her isolation - just as he opposed French support for the development of Guinea's economy in competition with his own. <sup>25/</sup> ~~Whereas~~ there had been reconciliation at Addis Ababa, the Ivory Coast leader had no wish to see a similar reconciliation within West Africa and he looked to other Francophone states and to France to cooperate with him in his new crusade. He maintained that the OAU, by itself, would be ineffective in stemming the revolutionary tide in Africa which already threatened states like the Congo (Zaire), the Cameroon Republic and the members of the Entente. Hence the continuing need for an organisation like the UAM.

Notwithstanding French support for his position, the President of the Ivory Coast was in a clear minority at the meeting in Dakar, in March 1964, when the UAM and a parallel organisation, the OAMCE, primarily concerned with economic matters, were both disbanded and replaced by the new African and Malagasy Union for Economic Cooperation (UAMCE). <sup>26/</sup> As its name suggests the new body would be concerned solely with economic, technical and cultural matters to the exclusion of politics which was now the responsibility of the OAU. It was a decision that Houphouët-Boigny could not (and did not) accept and the Ivory Coast continued to boycott the organisation during the ten months of its existence. Three of the four Entente states were also absent in April when the charter of the new organisation was finally signed - the exception was Dahomey (Benin) whose leaders were then estranged from the Entente. Nor was the French government prepared to intercede to secure compliance by the Francophone states with the provisions of the charter, notwithstanding appeals to this effect by Senegal and Mauritania. What did most damage to the UAMCE, however, were the largely ineffectual attempts, after 1963, to reverse the decline in radical fortunes in West Africa, culminating in the abortive invasion of Niger in October 1964 by the opposition Sawaba party in exile in Ghana.

Ghana's reported involvement in this unprovoked and unsuccessful attack lent support to the view, not only that the radical states constituted a grave and immediate threat to the peace and security of the region, and of Africa as a whole, but also that the fledgling OAU was unable, despite its charter, to guarantee the territorial integrity of its members. Earlier, there had been clear signs of division within the Entente, doubtless encouraged by the Ghanaian leadership. For two years, after 1961, Upper Volta had tried to operate a customs union with Ghana, while Dahomey had concluded customs agreements with Nigeria and Togo, in 1962, and was actively promoting a rival Benin Union that would also include Ghana.<sup>27/</sup> Relations within the Entente may have deteriorated still further, in 1963, after military intervention had removed the political leaders, first of Togo and then of Dahomey. After the Niger episode, however, and despite the evidence of Ghanaian complicity, the unity of the Entente states was soon reconstituted, while Upper Volta and Niger finally dropped their earlier support for the UAMCE.

Seizing the favourable opportunity provided by his radical opponents, and in the atmosphere of crisis following the attack on Niger, Houphouët-Boigny was able not only to revive and reunite the Entente, but also, over the opposition of Senghor and those committed to the Senegal River project, to rebuild a conservative coalition of Francophone states whose purpose was to exploit the discomfiture of the radical leaders and secure their continued isolation. He had first to replace the UAMCE with a more suitable body, similar to the UAM - which should not have been a difficult task given the weak structures of the new organisation, its lack of cohesion, the studied indifference of the French and the hostility of the Entente states. At stake, however, was the viability of Senghor's

proposed sub-regional grouping and the credibility of Mauritania's internal and external policies.

At the meeting of Francophone states at Nouakchott, in February 1965, there was clear evidence of the growing antagonism between Senegal and the Ivory Coast, the rivalry of their respective sub-regions, and the opposition between those who wanted a predominantly political body and those favouring a wholly economic one. It seemed for a time as though the conference would produce not one but three separate bodies. The first would comprise the states bordering the Senegal River, which Guinea would then be free to join; a second would consist of the Entente states, together with Togo; while the third would include the Central African states and the Cameroon Republic, whose interests could no longer easily be accommodated within an organisation based primarily on West Africa. Unity was maintained only when Senghor agreed, albeit reluctantly, to support the majority decision, taken by eight of the thirteen states attending, to revive the UAM in the guise of the Common Organisation of African and Malagasy States (OCAM) - but with responsibility for economic as well as political cooperation. <sup>28/</sup>

An immediate result of this decision was a crisis - the first of many - within the proposed Senegal River Organisation, as Sékou Touré refused to attend the Summit planned to coincide with the end of the Nouakchott meeting. <sup>29/</sup> During the next decade he would have frequent recourse to General de Gaulle's 'empty chair' tactics whenever he wished to indicate his disapproval of the line taken by the senior and more conservative Francophone leaders. Touré's growing personal animosity towards Houphouët-Boigny may well have prevented him from pursuing a more consistent policy towards Senegal and the Ivory Coast - or, indeed, profiting

from their continued rivalry. Houphouët-Boigny was quick to turn this to his own advantage, exploiting Senghor's difficulties with Touré to delay or prevent the formation of a rival group within the region, particularly one centred on Dakar, advertising its regional ambitions - the "creation of a vast common market" - and incorporating radical states like Guinea and Mali.

Already, in August 1964, when Senghor had arranged a meeting of representatives of the four Senegal River states to consider how they might best proceed with the project, Houphouët-Boigny contrived that same day to be meeting with Touré, Tubman, and Albert Margai of Sierra Leone, to discuss the creation of a free trade zone linking their respective states. The initiative was one close to the heart of the Liberian leader, but Houphouët-Boigny had previously rejected as unrealistic proposals for inter-state economic cooperation, even among Francophone states.<sup>30/</sup> In another attempt to undermine the UAMCE and prevent the emergence of a new sub-regional body based on Dakar, Houphouët-Boigny later proposed a reunion of former leaders of the African Democratic Rally (RDA) - including Touré and Keita, but excluding Senghor - to discuss reviving the now moribund organisation. It was difficult to see what purpose that would serve other than isolating Senghor.<sup>31/</sup> The Francophone leaders continued to fight the battles of the French West African Federation long after its demise.

Having achieved an early and relatively easy success at Nouakchott, Houphouët-Boigny proceeded, perhaps under French pressure, to engineer the admission to OCAM, in June 1965, of Congo-Léopoldville (Zaire) under its recently appointed, highly controversial and widely unpopular Prime Minister,

Moïse Tshombe. By admitting the Congo to full membership - as the fifteenth member - the Francophone states seemed not only to be enlarging their catchment area - and thereby indirectly threatening the legitimacy of the OAU - but also, and more important, to be accepting Tshombe as the duly elected head of government. Most OCAM members were reluctant to approve this new 'coup' by members of the Entente group. Mauritania took the opportunity to withdraw from the organisation whose support it no longer required and which, in any case, it now saw as an obstacle to better relations with the Maghreb states. Even Senghor only agreed to attend the relevant OCAM meeting at the last moment.<sup>32/</sup> The radical African leaders resumed their attacks on the conservative Francophone organisation and with growing support from other states. Finally Tshombe was removed as Prime Minister in October in what was widely seen as a major reverse for OCAM and an even more damaging blow to the authority and prestige of the President of the Ivory Coast.

Houphouët-Boigny's simultaneous campaign to complete the isolation of Ghana and the radical states by organising a boycott of the Accra Summit of the OAU, to be held in October 1965, certainly caused alarm in the Ghanaian capital where the President was unusually conciliatory and multiplied assurances and gestures of good-will, even to his Entente neighbours. In Africa, however, this move by the Entente was widely regarded as high-handed and possibly, as a serious threat to African unity. Nkrumah attacked the "antics of the Ivory Coast, Upper Volta and Niger" which were part of a "carefully worked out imperialist plot directly related to the Congo situation".<sup>33/</sup> Lagos radio itself described the Entente and OCAM as "inward-looking groups, overly insistent upon deepening the divisions between English- and French-speaking Africa."<sup>34/</sup> The "peace offensive"

of the Francophone States failed in its objectives. Six of the fourteen Francophone states were represented at the OAU Summit, along with other moderate states like Nigeria. Indeed, there were more heads of state and government at Accra than at some previous conferences, and they included the conservative President of the Congo, Joseph Kasavubu, who had just dismissed Tshombe. Moreover, the campaign had been counter-productive. The attempt to isolate the radical leaders had "boomeranged by isolating the Entente instead and did much to undermine its self-confidence and solidarity as a group." <sup>35/</sup> Certainly, the Francophone leaders of Central Africa showed clearly that they wished to dissociate themselves from a campaign whose focus and objectives were primarily West African. Here, too, perspectives had changed considerably since the formation of the OAU in 1963.

After the creation of the OAU in 1963, and the disappearance of the Monrovia and Casablanca groupings, it became increasingly difficult to maintain a high level of interest among Francophone states in what began to appear, more and more, and not only to those outside the 'club', as a parochial, politically divisive and very conservative body of opinion. Coupled with the elimination of most of the issues and many of the personalities that had once helped foster a defensive spirit among the Francophone leaders - and the real but gradual relaxation of the French 'presence' in much of Africa - it was difficult to escape the conclusion that the OAU, and not the UAM or OCAM, was now the appropriate forum for the discussion of important political issues.

Conversely, after 1963, economic questions came to assume greater importance everywhere on the continent, while regional, sub-regional and national differences became at the same time more pronounced. There was

now a clear and pressing need for smaller, more specialised groupings where the relevant governments could consult about ways of tackling similar problems and cooperate in pursuing common, or at least compatible objectives. Here the emphasis would be on functional integration rather than political union, on economic cooperation rather than economic nationalism.

Where the members of the Casablanca group and those of the UAM had been bound together by ideological affinities and common political objectives, rather than by a sense of regional attachment or shared economic interest, the great majority of organisations to be formed in Africa after 1963 would be concerned primarily with economic cooperation - which could be more effectively tackled at a regional or sub-regional level, and in a spirit of negotiation and pragmatism rather than one of confrontation and ideology. This did not mean that the earlier difficulties disappeared with the formation of the OAU. Many of the old differences would persist for the remainder of the decade and into the 'seventies.



REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

1. C. Hoskyns, 'Pan-Africanism and Integration', in A.Hazlewood (ed.) African Integration and Disintegration, p.364.
2. African states attending the initial Casablanca Conference on 3 January 1961 were : Egypt (UAR), Libya, Ghana, Guinea, Mali and Morocco - as well as the Algerian Provisional Government, although Algeria would not receive independence until later that year.
3. The full text of the Casablanca Charter can be found in L.B. Sohn (ed.) Basic Documents of African Regional Organizations, Vol.1., p.42.
4. The reader is directed to R. Julienne, 'The Experience of Integration in French-speaking Africa', in Hazlewood (ed.), African Integration and Disintegration, pp.339-353.
5. Le Monde, 21 December, 1966.
6. Le Monde, 24 September, 1967.
7. R. Bourgi, Le Général de Gaulle et l'Afrique Notre, 1940-1949, pp.335-338. "He wanted a federal ensemble based on collaboration between 'colonisers' and 'colonised'". Also J. Baulin, La Politique Africaine d'Houphouët-Boigny p.130.
8. Baulin, pp.134-5.
9. P.Robson, 'Problems of Integration between Senegal and Gambia', in Hazlewood, African Integration and Disintegration, p.185 ff.
10. The following were members of the Brazzaville group : Senegal, Mauritania, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Niger, Dahomey (Benin), Chad, Gabon, the Central African Republic, Congo (Brazzaville), Malagasy Republic and Cameroon.
11. Twenty African states attended Monrovia. In addition to the Brazzaville twelve, they were Ethiopia, Liberia, Libya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Togo and Tunisia.
12. T.P.Melady, Profiles of African Leaders, p. 142.
13. The signatories of the Lagos Charter were: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Dahomey (Benin), Ethiopia, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Upper Volta, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Congo (Leopoldville) & Zaire.
14. I. Baulin, pp.179-181 quotes the Ivory Coast leader as saying: "It would be in Africa's best interests if the artificial divisions between those in the 'Casablanca Group' and those in the 'Brazzaville or Monrovia Group' were to disappear, and the sooner the better."
15. This and subsequent quotations are from Proceedings of the Summit Conference of the Heads of State and Government held at Addis Ababa in May 1963, Vol.1.
16. Touré referred to the UAM as "the political instrument of those who would divide Africa". Baulin, p.53. He asked why Houphouët-Boigny, having worked to secure the dissolution of the Casablanca and Monrovia groups, should now persist with the UAM - which was in no sense a 'regional' body under the terms of the OAU Charter.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont.

17. "As so often happened before and since, the Entente was relegated to the background whenever Houphouët-Boigny found that he could operate more effectively in the wider African field offered him by the UAM." V.Thompson, West Africa's Council of the Entente, p.65.
18. Baulin, p.145; later, Yameogo proposed a compromise : "Through a UAM that is economic, technical and cultural, towards an OAU that is political." Baulin, p.145.
19. Baulin, p.145.
20. Baulin, p.146 (Ould Daddah), p.185 (Nigerian Minister).
21. Quoted in Baulin, p.145. Gabon and the Central African Republic, as well as Madagascar, wanted to keep the UAM.
22. Le Monde, 31 January 1967; also Baulin, p.54. The OERS was not formally established until March 1968 - at a conference of the four leaders in Labe, Guinea. It functioned only intermittently both before and after 1968 until its collapse in 1971 and subsequent revival as the OMVS, without the participation of Guinea. Guinea later rejoined.
23. Baulin, p.54.
24. Le Monde, 11 January 1966 (Mauritania's internal problems); 28 October 1967 (her external policies)
25. "Houphouët-Boigny was trying at one and the same time to isolate Sékou Touré and to torpedo the Union of Riverine States that Senghor was trying to establish." Baulin, p.148.
26. Already at a meeting in Cotonou in July 1963 the Francophone states had rejected Houphouët-Boigny's argument and opted, for the present, to merge the UAM with the OAU. Baulin, p.145.
27. Thompson, p.51 (Upper Volta agreement), p.55 (Dahomey agreements and Benin Union). Estranged from the Entente, Dahomey did not formally rejoin until January 1965.
28. Baulin, p.150.
29. Baulin, p.151.
30. Baulin, p.148.
31. Baulin, p.149.
32. Baulin, p.154.
33. Thompson, p.69.
34. Thompson, p.70.
35. Thompson, p.70.

CHAPTER 4PROGRESS TOWARDS ECONOMIC COOPERATION IN WEST AFRICA,  
1965-1968

Until the creation of the OAU in 1963 the central issue in African politics was unity and this naturally affected the way in which leaders viewed the related question of economic cooperation across existing frontiers. For the radical minority there could be no effective cooperation without political unity while, for the majority, economic cooperation was a necessary and preliminary condition for any major advance towards political union. Where the Nigerian Prime Minister had spoken in 1963 of "practical steps in economic, scientific and cultural cooperation" many other leaders present at the formation of the OAU, seem to have shared his conviction that economic cooperation, on a step-by-step basis, with the region as its initial focus, offered the best and probably only prospect of achieving continental unity. With the OAU a reality, however, and with the vexed question of union now in abeyance, African leaders began to value cooperation, not only as an instrument of political union but more so as an immediate and practical contribution to economic growth, industrial development and internal stability.

This change in attitude and emphasis was in large part a response to the serious economic difficulties confronting the African states shortly after independence. They found themselves in an increasingly competitive, industrialising world, with rising tariff barriers, quotas and other restraints on trade, with unpredictable shifts in the commodity markets, higher prices for imported goods and greatly diminished returns for their own produce. There was also the growing problem of internal unrest aggravated, if not provoked, by the generally poor performance of their

economies. At stake was the survival of many of these states, their ability to advance the welfare of their peoples, and secure the political emancipation of those still under colonial or white minority rule. Despite the enormity of the tasks ahead, these issues did seem to offer improved prospects for cohesion and cooperation among African governments and their leaders. Politically it was a time for reconciliation and rapprochement. But no less urgent was the problem of organising economic cooperation, at an appropriate level and within a suitable institutional framework.

In this chapter we are concerned to trace the origins and early development of regional cooperation and integration among the states of West Africa - as distinct from the continental alliances and the sub-regional groupings that were the subject of preceding chapters. It is our contention that, although ECOWAS was not finally established until 1975, it emerged not as the result of a sudden inspiration, nor as the work of an individual, state or group of states, but as the product of a decade and more of patient debate and continuing discussion, in which each state and every leader in the region was, at one time or another, more or less closely involved. In addition to this large body of collective wisdom the West African governments also had the services of their own specialists and advisers, and the assistance and encouragement of bodies like the Economic Commission for Africa, one of many United Nations' agencies active in the continent. (Table 4).

We were fortunate, too, in being able to draw on the recent history of cooperation and integration among the West European nations, whose Common Market stimulated much interest and debate in Africa and in other parts of the developing world. Nearer home, there were valuable lessons to be learnt from the experience of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, grouped first in the East

African Common Services Organisation (1961) and, after 1967, in the East African Community, a close-knit economic union that survived many vicissitudes until its unfortunate demise in 1977. The European Common Market, however, grouped countries with a long history of separate nationhood, while the idea of an East African Community was first devised and promoted by colonial officials; the African leaders were confronted at independence with a long established grouping and an institutional framework that did not always and at every point reflect their own preferences and priorities. We were aware, too, of the various political and economic arrangements among the Francophone states of black Africa. These, however, were either continental in scope, like the UAM and OCAM, overlapping several regions, or were more restricted in character, like the monetary and customs unions, but with no claim to regional inclusiveness. They did not correspond to the four regions designated by the OAU as the appropriate units for social and economic development.

ECOWAS itself was and remains a unique association of states, with its own background and history, its personnel and procedures, its problems and not inconsiderable achievements, and these will be the subject of later chapters. Here we propose to describe some of the major formative influences in the creation of ECOWAS, not least the contribution of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). We will then examine the initiatives taken by individual leaders and governments working towards the goal of regional economic cooperation within West Africa. The chapter concludes with an account of the three inter-state conferences, in Niamey (1966), Accra (1967) and Monrovia (1968), which led to the establishment of a short-lived West African Regional Group that can now, in retrospect, be seen as the true precursor of ECOWAS.

### Role and Early Proposals of the ECA

The OAU, in Article II of its Charter, had called on member states "to coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa" and had asked them, more specifically, to harmonise their general policies in such areas as transport and communication, health, sanitation and nutrition, and in science and technology. <sup>1/</sup> For this purpose the OAU had created an Economic and Social Commission which, in its first report, submitted in December 1963, recommended an Africa-wide free trade zone, a payments union, a continental communications system and much closer coordination of national development plans. <sup>2/</sup> But the optimistic language, the ambitious nature of the proposals and the absence of rigorous economic analysis did little to advance the idea of cooperation, while the notion of central control and coordination threatened to revive the debate about political union. The report was widely criticised inside Africa and the OAU has since preferred to concentrate on political issues leaving economic questions, including cooperation and other forms of collective action, largely to the governments directly concerned and to various specialist agencies, notably the Economic Commission for Africa and other United Nations instrumentalities. (Table 4).

Given the very wide discretion that most African political heads enjoy and the absence of any real public opinion on complex economic issues, bodies created to pursue economic cooperation are likely to meet with some predictable obstacles : difficulty in establishing their credentials and in accumulating sufficient independence and authority, let alone finance and technical resources, to be really effective. Here the United Nations could and did play an extremely useful role. In the General Assembly, and through

various agencies such as the UNDP, ECOSOC, UNCTAD, IBRD, FAO, WHO and UNESCO, the United Nations was active in assisting various 'regions' of the world in their attempts at economic and industrial development. The Economic Commission for Africa was created by ECOSOC in April 1958 with functions comparable to those of the Economic Commissions for Europe, Asia, and the Far East, and Latin America, created a decade earlier.

The ECA remained fairly inactive during its first two years until, largely at the instigation of African leaders themselves, the independent African states began to play a more active part in its affairs. But the major changes in the character of the ECA date only from 1962-3 when, as a result of African pressure, its membership and structures were drastically reformed, with the exclusion of South Africa and Portugal, the reduction of the colonial powers, Britain, France and Spain, from full to associate membership, and the appointment of Africans as permanent officials.<sup>3/</sup> With the creation of the OAU in 1963 a more fruitful dialogue was possible between the independent heads of government and the growing number of African specialists at ECA headquarters situated, like those of the OAU, in Addis Ababa. The larger organisation soon accepted the recommendation of the ECA that, in the interests of more effective coordination of economic development, the continent be divided into separate regional units comprising North, Central, East and West Africa. (Table 4).

There were organisational problems, particularly in the early years. The Francophone states were at first critical of the ECA and of the part played by English-speaking (and sometimes radical) states within the organisation - whose Executive Secretary after 1962 was the distinguished

TABLE 4

UN INVOLVEMENT IN THE WEST AFRICAN SUB-REGION  
SOME RELEVANT UNDP INTERCOUNTRY PROJECTS IN WEST AFRICA, 1972-1976

Name of Project	Countries Covered	Executing Agency
Flood Control and Warning System on the River Niger Basin (Phase 2)	Guinea, Mali, Niger	WMO
Hydrological Forecasting System for the Middle and Lower Basins of the Niger River	Benin, Cameroun, Mali, Niger, Upper Volta	WMO
Program for the Strengthening of Agrometeorological and Hydrological Services of the Sahelian Countries : Training Center for Agrometeorology and Applied Ayrology.	Chad, The Gambia, Mali Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Upper Volta	WMO
Onchocerciasis Control Program in the Volta River Basin Area: Applied Research (Epidemiology and Chemotherapy) and Training	Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast Mali, Niger, Togo, Upper Volta	WHO
Onchocerciasis Control in the Volta River Basin.	Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Togo, Upper Volta.	WHO
Applied Research on Trypanosomiasis Epidemiology and Control.	Ivory Coast, Niger, Nigeria, Upper Volta.	WHO
Regional Center for Postal Training, Abidjan	Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Upper Volta, Togo	UPU
Documentation Center for the Niger Basin.	Cameroun, Chad, Benin, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Upper Volta.	UNESCO
Telecommunications Network Adviser (W.Africa)	West African Subregion	ITU
Multinational School for Medium-level Telecommunications Personnel, Rufisque	Benin, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Upper Volta	ITU
Telecommunications Link between The Gambia and Senegal	The Gambia, Senegal	ITU
Hydroagricultural Survey of the Senegal River Basin (OMVS)	Mali, Mauritania, Senegal	FAO



Name of Project	Countries Covered	Executing Agency
Water Resources in the Lake Chad Basin (LCBC)	Cameroun, Chad, Niger, Nigeria,	FAO
Agricultural Research and its Application in the Senegal River Basin (OMVS)	Mali, Mauritania, Senegal.	FAO
Documentation Center for OMVS	Mali, Mauritania, Senegal.	FAO
Livestock Development in Assale-Servewel (LCBC)	Cameroun, Chad, Niger, Nigeria	FAO
Four Agricultural Centers in the Lake Chad Basin	Cameroun, Chad, Niger, Nigeria	FAO
Development of the Fisheries in Lake Chad	Cameroun, Chad, Niger, Nigeria	FAO
Research on Desert Locust (OCLALAV)	Benin, Cameroun, Chad, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Upper Volta.	FAO
Control of Grain-eating Birds (Phase 2)	Benin, Cameroun, Chad, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Upper Volta.	FAO
Agricultural Development in the Senegal River Basin (Phase 2) (OMVS)	Mali, Mauritania, Senegal	FAO
Hydraulic Development of Pastoral Areas (LCBC)	Cameroun, Chad, Nigeria, Niger	FAO
Creation of Four Forestry Centers Around Lake Chad (LCBC)	Cameroun, Chad, Nigeria, Niger	FAO
Implementation of Water Drilling Program in the Lake Chad Basin (LCBC)	Cameroun, Chad, Nigeria, Niger	FAO
Applied Research on Tsetse Control in Dry Savanna Zones.	Ivory Coast, Niger, Nigeria, Upper Volta	FAO
Study of the Mano River Basin : Land Resources Survey (Liberian Portion)	Liberia, Sierra Leone	FAO

TABLE 4 cont.

Name of Project	Countries Covered	Executing Agency
West Africa Rice Development Association (Phases 1 and 2)	Benin, The Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Upper Volta.	FAO
West African Clearing House Agreement	Benin, Cameroun, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Upper Volta.	ECA/UNCTAD
Updating of Prefeasibility Studies of the Mono River	Benin, Togo.	UNDP
Indicative Development Plan for Niger River.	Benin, Cameroun, Chad, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Upper Volta.	ECA
Niamey UNDAT	Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Niger, Nigeria, Togo, Upper Volta	ECA
Assistance to Banque ouest-Africaine de developpement	Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Niger, Nigeria, Togo, Upper Volta.	ECA

Source: John P. Renninger, Multinational Cooperation for Development in West Africa.

Compiled from "UNDP Regional Programme for Africa 1972-1976", The Projects listed in this table are illustrative rather than exhaustive.

Ghanaian civil servant, Robert Gardiner.<sup>4/</sup> However, they were even more suspicious of the OAU and its Secretary-General, Dialo Telli, nominated by the President of Guinea. There was also friction between the OAU and the ECA (and their respective officials) about the role and competence of the two bodies and this would persist until the end of the 'sixties. The solution adopted was for both organisations jointly to sponsor the many programmes, projects and conferences relating to the economic development of the continent. But, invariably, it was the ECA that was responsible for convening and servicing the various gatherings. Further reform of the administrative structures of the ECA in 1969 facilitated cooperation between the two bodies by acknowledging the political authority of the OAU and permitting the African states and their leaders to be even more closely associated with the activities of the organisation.

The creation and subsequent reorganisation of the ECA produced no immediate or dramatic transformation of the African economies. In the circumstances that was not to be expected. Its major contribution was a constant, vigorous and well-documented campaign to persuade African leaders of the need for and the benefits to be derived from economic cooperation. Their role was to establish and maintain contact on economic matters between African states, to provide the machinery for frequent consultation among the leaders, and to direct their attention to the kinds of cooperation most likely to provide solutions to their immediate economic problems. By acquiring and disseminating detailed information about current economic trends in Africa as a whole, the ECA played a vital supportive role and was well-placed to influence its sovereign clients. It was not alone in maintaining that the continent's division into small, often unviable economic units was impeding its industrial and economic growth, or in

promoting integration and cooperation as the most obvious remedies. But it did much to encourage and foster the trend to wider groupings of a regional and sub-regional character.

There was now a widespread conviction that, beyond the regional level, the costs of securing and organising cooperation were likely, at least for the foreseeable future, to exceed any potential benefits. "As the limitations of continental action have become evident there has been a swing back to the idea of regional cooperation, especially ... in the economic sphere." <sup>5/</sup> Regional integration was not without its problems. Relations among neighbouring states after independence were frequently strained by personal and political differences among the leaders, by economic rivalries, border disputes and the legacy of different colonial traditions. But the creation of the OAU and the encouragement and incentives offered by the ECA did make it possible for the governments involved to view their problems in a broader, less parochial perspective and without the earlier polemics.

Regional organisations were less likely to revive the debate about political union and the divisions it had entailed; were more likely to elicit an enthusiastic response from governments otherwise preoccupied with domestic issues; were easier to administer with the available, scarce talent; enabled officials to remain close to the realities of economic survival in Africa; and were more likely to generate projects that would attract overseas and domestic capital, would benefit the peoples and governments concerned, and would help generate further economic growth. The main but not the only emphasis was on the development of modern, large-scale industries, particularly steel, as a means of stimulating economic activity

at a number of "growth points". There was also concern with the availability and exploitation of natural resources, with the production of cheap electric power, and the provision of more adequate transport. <sup>6/</sup> Industrial location and the development of resources common to a number of countries were therefore high among the priorities of the ECA, and as these entailed political decisions and inter-governmental cooperation the search continued for suitable institutions and an acceptable and convenient political framework.

It is an indication of the growing support for the ECA among African governments that its officials were soon encouraged to use their initiative in identifying projects where regional or sub-regional cooperation was feasible and where the greatest benefit might be expected. And that confidence was reinforced by the establishment of the African Development Bank in 1964 - one of the ECA's earliest successes. But there is independent confirmation of the effectiveness of the ECA from an otherwise not uncritical observer.

There is no doubt that there is today a great deal more realism and understanding about the difficulties and possibilities of African economic cooperation than there was seven years ago, and a comparison of the level of debate at the ECA sessions in Tangier in 1960 and in Nairobi in 1965 shows this very clearly. Ideas of any grandiose joint cooperation have now been abandoned in favour of project cooperation at sub-regional level between small groups of states and there is some hope that in certain areas at least this may prove successful. <sup>7/</sup>

The ECA was not, however, alone in its efforts to promote regional economic cooperation. While the radical states had been in the forefront of moves towards political unification, it was the more moderate African

states, notably Liberia which, through the Conference of Independent African states, the United Nations, and later the OAU, had first emphasised the need for a common approach to the outside world and for more effective coordination of economic policies at a regional level. More than any other African leader Tubman would devote himself throughout the 'sixties to the creation of a West African economic community. It was the more unfortunate, therefore, that he should have died in July 1971, before the formation of ECOWAS for which he provided so much of the early inspiration. His policies in this matter were, however, continued by his successor, William Tolbert, who had long served as the country's Vice-President.

Within Liberia, Tubman had already been active, since 1944, in his efforts to break down the many barriers between the small Americo-Liberian elite and the large indigenous African majority. For over a century the self-perpetuating elite had dominated government and monopolised political as well as economic opportunities. Tubman perceived that such barriers, and the restrictive practices that accompanied them, were not only inimical to the country's social and political development, and damaging to its external image, particularly among Africans in the neighbouring colonial territories, but also that they greatly obstructed its economic growth, discouraged investment, and retarded economic diversification.

While his unification policy of social and political reforms helped promote greater national unity and de-fuse growing tensions, it was in the economic sphere that Tubman's policies achieved their earliest and perhaps most striking success. <sup>8/</sup> By removing the many restrictions on foreign firms, by acting to help eliminate the social barriers to an

integrated economy, by providing stable government, a greatly improved administration, and more equitable and efficient tax structures, Tubman had ensured a large and continuing flow of foreign investment and loans into Liberia - mainly American but later also West German, Swiss, Italian and British. By 1952 he could announce that Liberia was now able to meet all its financial obligations, both internal and external, and was to that extent master of its own affairs.

Where an independent Liberia had long been an inspiration to African nationalists striving to end colonial rule, it was Tubman's conviction that the newly independent states could also benefit from his country's recent experience of integration as an incentive to economic growth. Liberia had shown that integration and a larger market, without petty restrictions and controls, could provide a ready incentive for foreign investment, and that this investment could then be used to promote diversification and strengthen the country's political as well as its economic independence. Even before the Sanniquellie Agreement of 1959 Tubman was working to improve his relations with other independent leaders in West Africa, Nkrumah and Touré, and to convince them of the urgent need for economic cooperation and the creation of a Community of West African States, as a first and necessary step towards political union. Thus while the Sanniquellie Agreement was political in nature, it also had a strong economic undertone.

In his Inaugural Address to the Liberian nation, in January 1960, Tubman advocated an economic common market for the West African states, with the early formation of regional, economic and trade councils to coordinate their subsequent action. Even the largest states, he maintained, would benefit from association with their neighbours while, for the

smaller states, the advantages to be derived from cooperation were also considerable. <sup>9/</sup> The expanded market, increased trade, and the prospect of greater overseas investment were obvious attractions but Tubman, well aware of his country's social problems, shared by many others in the region, also stressed the importance of expanding and improving education, communications and basic services. The Liberian government would continue to promote regional and sub-regional cooperation, exploiting the country's unique historical background and its strategic location to work for better relations among its immediate and near neighbours, French and English-speaking, conservative and radical. A key figure in any West African undertaking, Tubman's guidance was particularly appreciated in the delicate and protracted negotiations that necessarily accompany the formation of a regional economic community. West Africa was fortunate to have had the services of such a skilled, experienced and dedicated statesman.

It was largely as a result of Tubman's initiatives, too, that the ECA, created in 1958, was transformed into a more effective agency through which the independent African states could themselves play an active part in promoting regional integration and furthering their own development. Here Liberia's role as a foundation member of the United Nations and her close ties with the United States were invaluable in securing international support for African efforts to re-shape the ECA into an agency that was more responsive to their needs and priorities and was also able to monitor and coordinate their individual efforts. It was as a result of these pressures that the ECA was several times reformed in the course of the 'sixties, while African governments came to be more closely associated with its activities on a regular and continuing basis.



Hence the institution in 1969 of a bi-annual Conference of Ministers, intended to assist the officials of the ECA, to ensure that the views of the OAU were known and understood and to promote cooperation between the two. <sup>10/</sup>

Despite delays and repeated setbacks Tubman and the responsible officials of the ECA persisted in the task of educating other leaders in the need for cooperation while exploring the many different approaches to the question and attempting to circumvent the major obstacles. At a sub-regional level Tubman began to canvass the idea of a free trade zone, grouping Liberia and its English-speaking neighbour, Sierra Leone, as well as the two adjoining French-speaking states, Guinea and the Ivory Coast. This would then serve as the possible nucleus of a West African free trade area - a new Monrovia grouping, but with an economic rather than a political objective, confined to West Africa, and, hopefully, more effective in bridging the ideological divide with the inclusion of Guinea alongside the Ivory Coast. It was the theme of Tubman's Inaugural Address to the nation in January 1964. <sup>11/</sup>

Liberia and Sierra Leone were fairly obvious partners in any sub-regional venture. Both governments were grappling not only with ethnic tensions, but also with the debilitating consequences, political and economic, of the traditional divisions between 'colony' and 'protectorate', 'creole' and 'native', Christian and non-Christian. <sup>12/</sup> Their proximity, common language, similar origins and early history - although Sierra Leone soon became a British colony - set them apart from their larger, French-speaking neighbours, as well as from the other more prosperous English-speaking states

of the region. There was also their comparative under-development and lack of infrastructure and the need for foreign capital to enable them to exploit their rich mineral and iron ore reserves. It was hoped that cooperation would also offer more immediate and tangible economic advantages, an increase in mutual trade, hitherto negligible, and collaboration in industrial and other joint ventures, including the marketing of iron ore. <sup>13/</sup>

As with the Gambia, after its independence in 1965, the sense of isolation was also a major factor in encouraging the search for wider groupings and new attachments. It may have been one factor prompting Liberia's later decision to join the West African Examinations Council, the only common services agency created by the British to survive Ghana's independence. Sierra Leone would in turn become the one English-speaking member of *Air Afrique*, the Francophone grouping administering the common external air services. Although this first attempt at sub-regional union between the two states was not to be successful, incentives such as these would, in 1973, lead to the creation of the Mano River Union, whose objectives were by no means confined to the development of the river that separated Liberia from Sierra Leone. President Tolbert himself remarked, in 1974, that the union should have come ten years later and was careful, like his predecessor, to insist that membership of the proposed free trade zone remain open to all other countries in the region. <sup>14/</sup>

In August 1964 Tubman, with the active encouragement of Houphouët-Boigny, convened a meeting of interested leaders to discuss the proposed free trade zone. The Ivory Coast and Guinea were represented in Monrovia alongside Sierra Leone and Liberia. It is difficult, however,

to gauge the nature and extent of the support offered by the two French-speaking states. If Touré appeared to support the scheme in 1964 it may have been either to strengthen his hand in negotiations with Senghor over the projected Senegal River scheme or, more likely, to bolster Senghor's wavering opposition to a renewed Francophone political grouping. On the other hand, Touré had long been an advocate of political union and was likely to encourage any venture that did not contradict his principles or weaken his country's independence. His relations with the Liberian President were cordial and he and Houphouët-Boigny had both availed themselves of Tubman's 'good offices' in the course of their many disputes.

It has been suggested that Houphouët-Boigny lent his support more in the hope of splitting the members of the incipient Senegal River group and thus preventing the emergence of a sub-regional body that would not only rival his own Entente but aspired to form the nucleus of a wider West African economic community.<sup>15/</sup> And yet, as the most industrialised member of the proposed free trade zone, the Ivory Coast was also likely to derive the greatest benefit from the new grouping.<sup>16/</sup> Indeed, the Ivory Coast had several times suggested such a zone and may have taken the initiative in recommending the four-state conference in Monrovia. Both Francophone states might at this stage have regarded Tubman's proposed groupings as a means to achieve other, unrelated sub-regional goals, or simply as offering some prospect of economic advantage and mutual benefit and at no great cost to themselves.

A further meeting of the four states, in February 1965, saw agreement on the creation of an Interim Organisation for Economic

Cooperation and a formal document was signed in Freetown in May 1965; this supported the principle of a sub-regional community whose members were pledged to remove trade barriers and foster cooperation in almost every field. However, the French-speaking states became more reticent as the grouping began to take administrative shape; they had in any case resumed their former quarrel, which would intensify in the course of 1966 and precluded any form of close collaboration between them. There were later prospects for cooperation between the two English-speaking states, as Liberia provided the secretariat of the new organisation in September 1965, while Sierra Leone appointed the first Administrative Secretary. Their union failed, however, to survive the 1967 election in Sierra Leone, when the government of Albert Margai was defeated and the country was subsequently plunged into political turmoil - from which it would not begin to recover until the end of the decade. <sup>16/</sup>

More significant from the viewpoint of the future ECOWAS was Liberia's involvement in another and earlier ECA proposal for a common industrial policy for the states of the West African region. This would entail a broad measure of agreement among the interested governments concerning the location of new industries in the most appropriate sites, where they might make the maximum contribution not only to the development of the countries directly involved, but also to the region as a whole. Although based essentially on economic criteria this did, nevertheless, amount to a delicate political operation, particularly as the ECA proposed to begin with the establishment of an iron and steel complex, whereas several states in the region, including some of the more influential, already had plans for just such an enterprise. The complex would be located, possibly in

Liberia, and its output would then be supplemented by production from several smaller plants and by additional rolling mills processing semi-finished steel or scrap. <sup>17/</sup> Such proposals were at the centre of the Lagos Conference on Industrial Coordination in West Africa, held in November 1963, itself one of the earliest attempts at securing economic cooperation in the region.

There was no immediate sequel to the Lagos meeting, although subsequent developments, including Tubman's initial success with his proposals for a free trade zone within the region, encouraged the ECA, along with the FAO, to sponsor a further conference at Bamako, in October 1964 - again on the theme of industrial coordination in West Africa. This time various other industries were also considered while there were more specific recommendations regarding the creation of a large steel complex in Liberia. However, there was dissatisfaction at this decision on the part of other prospective hosts, namely Guinea and Mali, while Mauritania declined to be bound by decisions of the conference and the Ivory Coast preferred not to attend. There was criticism, too, of the ECA report when findings were said to be incomplete. <sup>18/</sup> A decision was nevertheless taken in favour of the Liberian site.

It was at that apparently favourable juncture that President Tubman advised postponing implementation of the decision until a further meeting could be held in Monrovia in August 1965. There it was proposed and agreed that industrial development should not be confined to any one industry but should instead be considered in the context of "general institutionalised economic cooperation" within the region. <sup>19/</sup> This

resolution was particularly significant as it marked the beginning of - and offered a suitable basis for - a regional economic grouping of the West African states. In that sense it was the forerunner of ECOWAS. The proposal was followed up during that and the following year, receiving administrative and technical support from the ECA. A draft treaty for the West African Iron and Steel Community was signed and a provisional council appointed to supervise the project later in 1965. However, despite apparent agreement on the principles that should govern the development and coordination of future industries to be established in the region, including iron and steel, there were serious differences at the next meeting of the Interim Council in Freetown, in April 1966. The iron and steel proposals were then finally shelved, after indications that countries such as Senegal and Guinea would, in any case, proceed with plans for the creation of their own steel works, processing scrap or imported billets. <sup>20/</sup>

#### West African Regional Group

In 1965-6 the ECA sponsored a series of meetings in each of the four African regions to stimulate the governments concerned to practical measures of economic cooperation. The meeting in Niamey, Niger, in October 1966, was the last of the four, and followed on from the earlier West African conferences on the more limited themes of economic coordination and a common industrial policy. Fourteen West African states were represented in Niamey where delegates considered a document prepared by the ECA and setting out details of a "project of association". The aim was to expand existing areas of economic cooperation and identify others such as transport or the utilisation of energy resources, where common policies

might fruitfully be pursued. <sup>21/</sup> The countries involved agreed, at the end of the meeting, to pursue these exploratory contacts. Articles of Association would be drafted, circulated and approved, at the latest within six months. And if nothing more specific emerged from the conference it was nevertheless significant as the first meeting to be attended by every independent state in the region. It was also the first occasion on which delegates from the former British and French states met together primarily to discuss economic integration in its broadest sense. The choice of Niamey as the venue for such a historical conference was symbolic in two senses: first, as a recognition by the ECA of the need to gain the confidence of the Francophone states - Niger, was not only a member of the Entente but its leader, Hamani Diori, was also President of OCAM - and secondly, as an indication of the importance which the ECA attached to Nigeria's membership of the future West African community, since Niger had consistently worked since independence for improved relations with her large southern neighbour.

A second meeting was organised in Accra, Ghana, in April/May 1967, just within the deadline specified at Niamey. <sup>22/</sup> Two states, Guinea and the Gambia, were not represented on this occasion. Gambia's absence may have been due to its problems with Senegal which had yet to renounce its ambitions to annexe the smaller country - The Gambia later signed the Articles of Association. Guinea, was also absent from Accra and its government declined, moreover, to approve the Articles of Association adopted there - reflecting the current hostility between Ghana and Guinea following the overthrow of Nkrumah in February 1966.

The ECA again played a leading part in the preparations for the conference, whose principal business was to approve and sign the proposed Articles of Association. The opening speech, by the Ghanaian President, General Ankrah, called for the removal of trade barriers as quickly as possible, and it was his intention and that of most other delegates to move rapidly towards a more permanent and more visible form of collaboration. An Interim Council of Ministers was appointed to prepare a treaty for the approval of the next conference, with Leopold Senghor as Chairman, while Accra became headquarters of the provisional secretariat.

The Articles of Association were, in many respects, very similar to those later adopted by ECOWAS. <sup>23/</sup> The aims of the proposed community included the expansion of trade, the inter-change of goods and services among the member states, and the promotion of "a coordinated and equitable development of their economies". Article 2 listed ways in which these aims might best be secured, including "consultation on a continuous basis", coordination and harmonisation of economic policies, progressive elimination of customs and other barriers to the expansion of trade, and joint developments in the areas of industry and agriculture, transport and communications, and the exploitation of energy resources.

Article 3 was particularly significant and would later be retained by ECOWAS as it served to protect those member states who wished to pursue other forms of cooperation either within the community, at a sub-regional level, or outside the community, perhaps in association with a former Metropole. This concession was necessary to secure not only the support of the Francophone states, but also to reassure the growing number



of states that belonged to functional groupings such as the River and Lake Development agencies or which were engaged in other forms of bi- or multilateral cooperation. Provided such commitments did not "prejudice the aims of the Community" they did not require the approval of member states as a whole.

Article 5 defined the membership of the Interim Council of Ministers and thereby of the Community itself and in terms that coincided with those used by the ECA and the OAU. While there had been some early ambivalence on the part of the ECA about the Eastern boundary of the West African region, this had since been clearly defined to exclude the states of former French Equatorial Africa. In Accra there seems to have been complete agreement on the territorial limits of the new grouping and on the extent of the proposed membership. Article 6 stipulated that decisions by the Interim Council would be taken by simple majority vote, although it is unlikely that any significant initiative could have been approved without a broad consensus among the membership. The principal task of the Council was to prepare and draft the Treaty that would finally establish and govern the proposed Economic Community of West African States and Article 7 authorised the Council to remain in being until the Treaty itself became effective.

The first meeting of the Interim Council was in Dakar, Senegal, in November 1967, with Leopold Senghor in the Chair.<sup>24/</sup> From the outset Senghor seems to have been particularly concerned to meet the probable objections from the more militant of the Francophone states, who viewed the ECA proposals and the prospect of closer collaboration with the

Anglophone countries with considerable misgivings not untinged with hostility. However, Senghor was not himself among the critics and in his opening speech he recalled his consistent support for regional groupings since the inception of the OAU. But for his country's recent rapprochement with the Ivory Coast, and unfortunate memories of the Mali Federation, he might also have reminded visiting Ministers of his long-standing attachment to the principle of federation and, in particular, his close identification with the French West African Federation and his efforts in the late 'fifties to secure its independence as a single political unit. In the decade that followed he had moved far towards acceptance of the need for broader regional integration and a political and economic community open to English, French and Portuguese speaking states. Such groupings, "in our case from Mauritania to Nigeria", would have "the advantage of homogeneity, from the triple standpoint of geography, ethnic affinity and culture."

Senghor's endorsement of the proposed new community also owed much to the renewal, in November 1967, of cooperation among the members of the Senegal River Basin group, a projected free trade zone which had been unable to function normally after the sudden withdrawal of Guinea early in 1965. The return of Guinea, an enthusiastic advocate of political unity and economic integration, gave new life to the group and renewed its ambition to become the nucleus of a wider West African economic community.

In his opening speech Senghor made clear his position and that of his allies in the Senegal River group, "Upon reflection the wonder is not that we should be meeting here today but why we did not begin to meet until 1966." He summarised the main argument for integration: "It is

plain, nowadays, that each of our States, taken in isolation, is too small to form a worthwhile, viable economic unit, including the broad-acred Nigeria." There were problems, and differences, but they were not insuperable. "It happens that the deepest cleavage is not between Arabo-berbers and Negro-Africans, but between Francophones and Anglophones. Yet, to our mind, such differences are not obstacles but are on the contrary springboards for our development". Their two European languages, "which are the expression of two great cultures", should be viewed as complementary assets rather than fighting weapons. "It is time to look beyond the spirit of Fashoda, that is, the spirit of French-English rivalry."

Senghor paid suitable tribute to the ECA "for taking the initiative of helping to translate into *facts* what, in 1963, was only an *idea*". The programme of studies long associated with the ECA had enabled African governments to approach their own problems "no longer simply within the narrow framework of local affairs, and from the standpoint of strictly national interests, but on a broader basis, within the perspective of both regional and African development." The Niamey meeting provided an invaluable opportunity for the twelve states of West Africa to become "conscious of their common interests, if not of their common culture." Accra had "marked a second and more significant stage towards the realisation of a future West African Community, by working out a 'Protocol of Association' signed by twelve states." Dakar, however, would be a different kind of meeting and marked "a turning point" in their evolution : since it was a conference of African Ministers and therefore a "projection of the government of our twelve states of West Africa, which in the meantime have become fourteen.

It signified the end of the ECA's preliminary work and the assumption of the responsibility for cooperation by African governments "which have now become conscious of their common interests and have decided to face them squarely, in a new setting, and one freely chosen by themselves."

These remarks were apposite in view of the misgivings that many Francophone states still entertained about the role and function of the ECA. Indeed the latter body had again been responsible for a series of detailed reports and recommendations including a preliminary draft of a proposed Treaty for possible adoption by member states as the basis for the future Community. ECA thinking continued to be influenced by the model of the EEC and more particularly, by the long established Coal and Steel Community, both as an exercise in regional and industrial integration, and as the forerunner of the Common Market itself. The ECA was likewise concerned to remove or reduce trade barriers between Francophone members of the UDEAO and the other West African states so that exports from the latter would be subject to the same fiscal regime as goods emanating from France and her EEC partners. This proposal seems to have aroused considerable hostility on the part of UDEAO members, who insisted that it would involve sweeping changes in the Treaty of Association with the EEC which they and other African states had signed at Yaoundé in 1961. They also resisted suggestions from the ECA for the removal of restrictions on capital transfers between African states, as well as proposals for a payments' union and a 'common accounts' currency.

Having attempted to conciliate the critics of the ECA, Senghor proceeded to describe the business of the conference which was to clarify the objectives and define the outlines of the future Treaty that would bind what were now fourteen states "into a great economic unit". The meeting had also to pronounce on the shape and function of the community. "You will have to say which form the community will adopt : whether it should be a kind of *free trade area* or a *common market*." There were the difficulties to which the ECA had already alluded and they were "by no means negligible to begin with."

'Among our states, some are linked with France, through the Customs Union of the West African States (UDEAO), others are linked to Great Britain by means of the Commonwealth. On top of this most of us are associated with the European Economic Community.

The choice was therefore a difficult one.

It is likely that you will not be able to decide straight away by a *yes* or a *no*. In fact, if we want to be realistic and at the same time display powers of creative imagination, it will be a question of beginning with a sort of free trade area and finishing, step by step, with an integrated community."

He was also careful to emphasise that any liberalisation of inter-community trading must not be at the expense of "the agreements made earlier with other partners, particularly with the former Metropoles." Progress towards integration would be gradual, "step by step", involving "mutual concessions" made, perhaps "after lengthy confrontations". But, "it is preferable to advance methodically, on sure ground, rather than to attack impetuously, certain problems that were not yet ready for consideration and action by the community." A pre-requisite for success, however, was the creation of a political authority for the new community, albeit within

the terms of the OAU Charter. Only such an authority could "ensure that political directives at the highest level and given from time to time to the Interim Council of Ministers and its Secretariat for the achievement of quick results." In this sense, commented one Nigerian observer, the future Community is "not only intended to provide the catalyst for economic cooperation but also to serve political purposes under the auspices of the OAU." The same observer suggested that an area of particular concern to the Francophone leaders and to their English-speaking counterparts was the widespread social and political unrest in the latter part of the decade, which appears "to have ushered in a long period of serious instability in many West African countries and to have temporarily impaired their ability to develop rapidly." <sup>25/</sup> Political instability in many states, coupled with civil war in Nigeria, suggested the need for "measures for collective security".

The conference concluded with a series of recommendations that, despite Senghor's warnings, did not perhaps take sufficient account of the hesitations of the Francophone states and the opposition of some of their leaders, notably the Ivory Coast and some other members of the Entente. Where the Ministers favoured an integrated common market, rather than a more limited free trade area or customs union, this would require far-reaching changes and a complicated timetable so that common policies could be approved and implemented in successive stages. The conference also asked that barriers to inter-state trade be removed and that future development plans be coordinated, while education and research were identified as obvious areas for future cooperation. Once the preliminary studies had been

completed and the relevant proposals formulated, the provisional secretariat would proceed with the preparation of the Treaty. This could then be presented for approval and adoption at the next conference of Heads of State in Monrovia, in April 1968. It is clear in retrospect that Dakar, like so many other early gatherings of this nature, promised considerably more than it could ever hope to deliver. While the Francophone states included prominent advocates of regional integration, like Senghor himself, the majority were not yet ready to abandon their primary allegiance to France and the benefits they derived therefrom - in favour of an incipient regional community that offered little as yet in the way of tangible rewards.

The third summit of the West African states met in Monrovia, Liberia, in April 1968, following extensive lobbying on behalf of the conference by President Senghor, as Chairman of the Interim Council of Ministers, and the other leaders of the Senegal River group. President Mokhtar Ould Daddah of Mauritania was particularly active, having been delegated by his colleagues "to consult other West African Heads of State for the creation of a Regional Group embracing all of the West Africa States."<sup>26/</sup> In the course of his extensive travels in the area, Ould Daddah visited Nigeria to solicit our continued support for the regional experiment. In welcoming Ould Daddah I was able to signify our "complete agreement" on the need for closer cooperation within the West African region and in the context of African unity.<sup>27/</sup> In our joint communiqué it was stated that "the Nigerian Head of State confirmed that Nigeria has always supported any proposal which brought African countries together. The proposed Regional Grouping will help promote greater economic cooperation and unity in West Africa." I therefore agreed in principle to participate in the

Monrovia Conference. Urgent domestic considerations, unfortunately, prevented me from being there in person, but Nigeria was represented by Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Council, assisted by a very high-powered delegation.

The purpose of the Conference, which had the enthusiastic support and approval of President Tubman, was to establish the new community and approve the proposed Treaty which, together with the Articles of Association, would govern the Regional Group. The success of the meeting depended on the ability of West African leaders to resolve their differences satisfactorily and cooperate in the spirit of regional and African unity. An important step in this direction had been the return of Guinea to the Committee of Senegal River States, in November 1967, preceded by Touré's even more unexpected overtures to France and his Francophone neighbours in October. In Paris, in April 1968, Senghor saw both President de Gaulle and Houphouët-Boigny in the hope of effecting a reconciliation between Guinea and France;<sup>28/</sup> at the same time he suggested coordinating the activities of the Entente and the Senegal River states with a view, perhaps, to their cooperation within the proposed West African Regional Group.<sup>29/</sup>

Until shortly before the Monrovia Conference began there was uncertainty as to which states would be represented and by whom. It was thought increasingly unlikely that the Entente states would attend since, at a meeting of the UDEAO, prior to Monrovia, Diori had again emphasised the budgetary and fiscal problems that would ensue were the Monrovia Conference to endorse the position already taken at Accra and Dakar. Cooperation should, in his view, be limited initially to such areas as transport, communications, health and student exchanges.<sup>30/</sup>



In January 1968 the Entente had already decided, prior to an OCAM meeting, to retain and even develop its "privileged ties" rather than dissolve itself within a wider body. <sup>31/</sup> In the event only the President of Upper Volta, General Lamizana, was present at Monrovia, thereby dissociating himself from his Entente partners. Senghor was there, but the Sierra Leone delegation had to return home following military intervention in that country. Hence only nine of the fourteen states signed the Protocol finally agreed in the Liberian capital.

This began by echoing Senghor's previous insistence on the need for a political authority competent to make the necessary decisions which the Council of Ministers and the Secretariat could then translate into policies and decisions.

Convinced that only the direct intervention of the Heads of State and Government can give the necessary impulse and direction to the historic efforts to establish the West African Regional Group and to achieve its objectives...<sup>32/</sup>

In the absence of four of the five Entente states, however, further progress seemed impossible - the political will was not yet there. Already seriously divided over their attitude to the attempted secession in Nigeria and the continuing civil war, the Entente countries may have been the more concerned to avoid further public differences - although there was further evidence of their divisions at Monrovia. The appearance of the President of Upper Volta was highly significant in this respect - as was the claim, by absent Togo, that the government supported the idea of regional economic cooperation and was ready to join in the new union once it materialised.

In his opening address Tubman could not refrain from indirectly criticising those who had absented themselves. The various conferences inspired by the ECA had yet to produce positive results, thanks largely to "powerful elements within and outside the West African sub-region which have in the past tended to thwart all meaningful efforts at cooperation." Once again he stressed the need for economic integration in the region and reminded his audience that most of the African states were among the least developed in the world. He conveyed a sense of urgency and of the direction in which they must move.

We must now mobilise our search for effective and practicable cooperation measures which can be taken together not in some distant future but in the months immediately ahead. I hope that the specific practical cooperative steps we may take will move us towards our ultimate goal of full and effective cooperation, among the nations of the West African sub-region. 33/

He would be entrusted by the conference with the delicate task of contacting the absent states with a view to encouraging them to join the new Regional Group.

The achievements of Monrovia were not, however, confined to the adoption of the Protocol. There was a further decision to delegate specific tasks to various groups of states.<sup>34/</sup> Thus Senegal and Liberia were invited to draft the Treaty that would hopefully inaugurate the new economic grouping. It was their work on the constitutional issues and on the shape of the future customs union that seems to have resurrected Senegal's (and France's) interest in the new dormant UDEAO, and thus prepared the way for the Francophone West African Economic Community (CEAO) that would be

launched in 1973 - in anticipation of our own ECOWAS. Although Senghor had failed in his efforts to persuade Houphouët-Boigny to attend the Monrovia summit and provide a secure Francophone majority within the proposed Regional Group, he may well have concluded that a West African customs union, confined to French-speaking states, was now the best of the available options. It would at least have the merit of preserving (or reviving) something of the earlier spirit of Francophone cooperation and did not altogether preclude the more ambitious kind of project with which Senghor had been so closely associated in the 'sixties. But when the President of Senegal returned to the theme of economic integration, in the mid-'seventies, it was as the advocate not of a regional group, but of one that would extend the entire length of the Atlantic coast, up to and including an independent Angola, and incorporating West as well as Equatorial Africa. The alternative, in his view, would be an African community dominated by the new economic strength of a re-united oil-rich Nigeria.

For their part Nigeria and Guinea were invited to prepare a detailed report on those areas of economic, social and cultural cooperation that should receive priority in future deliberations by the community. The Nigerian and Guinean representatives met in Lagos, in June 1968, and agreed a set of recommendations for the next summit in Upper Volta, in 1969. Their preliminary studies had taken them to the various West African countries and interestingly it was these contacts and the ensuing recommendations that seem to have convinced President Eyadema of Togo of the benefits to be derived from regional cooperation. Although not present at Monrovia, Togo subsequently indicated her interest in joining such a grouping and the basis was laid for the joint Nigeria-Togo initiative of 1971-72 that,

in turn, would lead to the creation of ECOWAS some three years later. Thus, where the Monrovia Conference had marked a pause in the movement towards regional cooperation the work of our two joint committees did point the way within the region to the major economic initiatives of the 'seventies, the CEAO on the one hand, and ECOWAS on the other. Where the first would be limited in membership and influence, and restricted to a number of Francophone states, the second was to be all-embracing, cutting across linguistic, cultural, economic and political barriers, and ultimately bringing together sixteen independent West African states.

The next summit of the Regional Group had been due to convene in Ouagadougou, Upper Volta, in March 1969. This was intended as a gesture of appreciation and encouragement to the one Entente state which had defied Francophone pressures to attend the Monrovia meeting. Unfortunately, it proved impossible to hold the 1969 summit, due largely to events elsewhere in Africa and the continuing crisis in Nigeria.<sup>35/</sup> Although the Federal Military Government was preoccupied with pressing domestic issues, we nevertheless continued to do everything in our power to assist the cause of West African integration. As we pointed out to other African leaders, however, the cause of West African integration would not be helped by the disintegration of its largest political unit.<sup>36/</sup> Fortunately, only a few leaders ever pretended that it would.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

1. Charter of the OAU in Z.Cervenka, The Unfinished Quest for Unity : Africa and the OAU, Appendix 2, pp.228-235.
2. Cervenka, p.36.
3. C.Hoskyns, 'Pan-Africanism and Integration', in A.Hazlewood (ed.), African Integration and Disintegration, pp.388-389.
4. R.H.Green and K.G.V.Krishna, Economic Cooperation in Africa, p.118.
5. Hoskyns, p.368.
6. P.Robson, 'Economic Integration in Equatorial Africa', in Hazlewood (ed.), p.63. Also N.G. Plessz, Problems and Prospects of Economic Integration in West Africa, pp.69-72.
7. Hoskyns, p.390.
8. C.Clapham, Liberia and Sierra Leone : An Essay in Comparative Politics, pp.11-12.
9. Melady, Profiles of African Leaders, pp. 109-110.
10. Cervenka, p.181.
11. R.I.Onwuka, Development and Integration in West Africa, p.54.
12. Clapham, pp.18-21.
13. Liberia was one of five African countries and three foreign firms who in 1973 subscribed capital for the development and exploitation of iron ore deposits in Guinea, close to the Liberian border. The other African countries involved were Algeria, Nigeria, Zaire, and Guinea herself. West Africa, 19 Feb.1973.
14. West Africa, 21 Oct.1974.
15. Le Monde, 11 May 1964; also J. Baulin, La Politique Africaine d'Houphouët-Boigny, p.145 ff.
16. Green and Krishna, p.40; Plessz, p.65. Plessz also points out that where Liberia and Sierra Leone operated a large free enterprise economy, that of the Ivory Coast was more interventionist, while Guinea was approaching a centralised, planned economy. Guinea's currency was unconvertible and she had strong links with the Eastern bloc countries; the Ivory Coast belonged to the Franc Zone and the BCEAO and applied EEC preferences, while Sierra Leone adhered to the Commonwealth preferential system and was a member of the Sterling Area. Liberia's currency was the dollar and she enjoyed close financial and trade connections with the United States. pp.63-64.
17. Green and Krishna, pp.40-41.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont.

18. There were complaints that the basic ECA study "had not covered Mauritania at all and was inadequate on Guinea", both of which (like Liberia) had rich iron ore deposits. Francophone suspicions that the ECA favoured the English-speaking states were reinforced as a result. Green and Krishna, pp.40-41; Onwuka, p.56. (Ivory Coast absent.)
19. J.P.Renninger, Multinational Cooperation for Development in West Africa, p.31.
20. Onwuka, p.59.
21. The "ambitious agenda" included "studies on the development of forest industries, food and other agricultural industries, chemicals and fertilisers, cement and small scale industries, as well as the possibilities for coordinating transport and energy development. There was also a proposal to establish "elaborate inter-governmental machinery for sub-regional economic cooperation". Plessz, p.72.
22. Le Monde, 6 May 1967.
23. Articles of Association for the Establishment of an Economic Community of West Africa (initialled 4 May 1967).
24. Le Monde, 23 Nov. 1967. The following paragraphs are based on The President of the Senegalese Republic's Address for the Opening of the Interim Council of Ministers of Economic Affairs in West Africa.
25. Despatch from the Nigerian Ambassador in Dakar.
26. A document signed by the four Presidents of the countries (7 Nov.1967) participating in the Senegal River grouping was circulated among the other West African countries - part of it reads as follows:  
 "The necessity presenting itself more and more for our peoples to constitute viable economic and political entities leads us to re-affirm our determination to face the task of creating a Regional Group. To this effect, a consultation at the highest level seems to be the best and shortest way to achieve positive results."
27. The relevant paragraph in my speech reads:  
 "Permit me to say that Nigeria has always supported fully any proposal which will bring together and promote deep understanding among African countries. In the context of continental unity, Nigeria has always believed that the countries in West Africa should work more closely for the development and the safety of their peoples. It is in our interest to promote economic cooperation and develop a common approach to the problems of security and political instability in our part of the world. I recognise that we must do this under the umbrella of the OAU whose Charter enjoins us not to interfere in the internal affairs of member states."

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont.

28. Le Monde, 4 Oct.1967. (Toure's overtures to France); 8 Nov.1967. (Toure attends Bamako Conference of Inter-State Committee for the Development of the Senegal River Basin); 26 March 1968 (creation of the Organisation of Riverine States bordering the Senegal River - OERS); 10 April 1968 (Senghor and Houphouët-Boigny meet in Paris).
29. The report of our ambassador in Senegal advised that Senghor was in Paris and "campaigns for the resumption of all traditional relations with France and Guinea for the benefit of Senegal River States Organisation of which Sekou Toure is the Chairman. Senghor seeking Houphouët-Boigny's support while in Paris with discussions of cooperation possibilities between Senegal River Organisation and the five Entente States Council. You may wish to consider the impact nine Franco-philies against five others including Nigeria at the imminent Monrovia Economic Summit." (Telegram received 13 April 1968).
30. Onwuka, p.63.
31. Le Monde, 19 Jan. 1968 (OCAM, Niamey); 20 Jan.1968, (Entente to keep 'privileged ties').
32. Protocol Establishing the West African Regional Group (signed 24 April, 1968).
33. Onwuka, p.64.
34. President W.V.S.Tubman to the Nigerian Head of State, 22 July 1968.
35. In a letter dated 27 Nov. 1968 the Foreign Minister of Senegal had reported to his Liberian counterpart that he had "mailed to his colleagues of the eight French-speaking African States the draft treaty and had expressed the wish that they should submit their observations on the treaty to him by October 31. However, up to November 27 he had not received any reactions from his colleagues." Furthermore, "discussion of the draft treaty by member states of the Senegal River States should have taken place on November 21 but the meeting was re-scheduled for December 8 and [he] referred to recent events in West Africa."
36. "We all realise that if Nigeria is allowed to disintegrate, it will set a tragic precedent for other West African countries. The break-up of Nigeria will definitely be inconsistent with the current move for a regional grouping in West Africa."  
Welcome Address by the Head of the Federal Military Government on Official Visit of the President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

## PART II



## CHAPTER 5

### TEMPORARY SETBACKS TO COOPERATION IN WEST AFRICA, 1966-1970

The failure of the West African Regional Group was a serious, if temporary setback to our hopes of regional integration. Although regrettable, it was not altogether unexpected given the magnitude of the problems confronting us, the meagre resources then at our disposal, and the deteriorating political situation which, in the second half of the 'sixties, was conducive neither to cooperation nor to accommodation. During these years the region was a prey to domestic instability and external insecurity, with seven of the fourteen independent states experiencing at least one military intervention.

There was civil war in the largest state, Nigeria, from 1967 until 1970, and a serious and prolonged constitutional crisis in Sierra Leone during 1967-8. There was also a continuing and increasingly successful war against Portuguese rule in Guinea-Bissau, waged by African nationalists with support mainly from neighbouring Guinea : one consequence of which was the unsuccessful invasion of Conakry, the capital of Guinea, in 1970 - with incontrovertible evidence of Portuguese, if not French, complicity.

Meanwhile diplomatic incidents and hostile verbal exchanges were also frequent, contributing to the general sense of insecurity. They involved Guinea and her more conservative Francophone neighbours, as well as Guinea and the new military rulers in Ghana, after the removal of Nkrumah. There was also tension between Senegal and the Gambia, an English-speaking enclave that became independent in 1966.

Among the Francophone states there was growing alarm at the direction taken by French diplomacy during these years, coupled with uncertainty about the probable consequences of political and social change in France itself, including her rapid integration within the EEC. Nor were they reassured by the unexpected resignation in 1969, of General de Gaulle, who had commanded the respect, loyalty and affection of many French-speaking African leaders. But it was the civil war in Nigeria and the threat of external (mainly French) involvement that was largely responsible for the mounting tension within the region and which briefly but effectively interrupted our progress towards regional cooperation and integration.

From the perspective of West African integration and ECOWAS, however, there were other, more encouraging, developments in this same period. The French decision in 1968, to become involved in the Nigerian civil war was taken without regard for the UN Charter and that of the OAU - and without consideration for the views and interests of our Francophone neighbours who, from the outset, had adopted what seemed to us a responsible and correct attitude. The result of this French initiative was to accelerate rather than arrest the steady decline in Francophone solidarity that had begun with the independence of Guinea in 1958.

The fact that the preparatory meetings of the West African Regional Group took place at all testifies to the relaxation of the French hold and presence in Africa. So long as French influence on the Francophone states was pronounced, however, there could be little prospect of effective or permanent cooperation across former colonial and linguistic frontiers. But in Nigeria, in 1968, the French seemed to have seriously misjudged the situation - perhaps to the lasting detriment of their ties with Africa.

French influence persisted into the next decade (and beyond), but the trend, by the end of the 'sixties, was already towards a much more assertive and independent role for the Francophone African leaders. ECOWAS and the West African states themselves would be the principal beneficiaries.

Nigeria survived the civil war with her economy and polity not only intact but greatly strengthened, and with the Federal Military Government more than ever convinced of the need for an active, forward-looking foreign policy and, wherever possible, for improved relations with our West African neighbours. Reconciliation at home was the first and immediate priority to be followed, at the earliest opportunity, by reconciliation with the few African leaders who had not shared our conviction that the struggle for Nigerian unity was also the struggle for African unity. We also believed that a regional community was the best means to safeguard the one and advance the other.

#### 1. Nigerian Civil War

Where Central and Northern Africa had been the main areas of crisis in the early 'sixties, West Africa would be the focus of international attention in the second half of the decade, beginning as early as 1963 with military intervention first in Togo and then in Dahomey. The critical year, however, was 1966, when the military also assumed responsibility for government in Nigeria, in January, and in Ghana the following month. The tragic death of the Nigerian Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, and the substitution of a military government under General Ironsi, brought no immediate change to the country's policy of friendship and cooperation with all its neighbours and with the other West African states.

There may have been some in the administration who, then as later, were convinced that Nigeria's interests could best be served by a more aggressive pursuit of her own interests in the region at the expense of her immediate neighbours. Certainly the advisors, and the military, who wished to impose a unitary system on Nigeria, regardless of the wishes of the peoples concerned, were unlikely to show much consideration for smaller and weaker states with very different cultures, traditions and outlooks. <sup>1/</sup> In any case, Ironsi's term of office was too short to permit any change in foreign policy - even had he been prepared to sanction it, which is far from certain.

The temptation to 'go it alone' was certainly strong as a united Nigeria constituted a formidable political and economic unit whether considered in terms of her population and potential market, her manpower and range of technical skills, her present wealth and future prospects. It was these same factors that had at first aroused the misgivings, and even fears, of the smaller West African and Francophone states at the prospect of Nigerian independence. It was to the credit of Tafawa Balewa and his personal diplomacy that he was quickly able to allay most of these fears and to establish cordial relations with all our neighbours.

When I assumed the responsibility for leading Nigeria's military government in August 1966, our first priority was to restore law and order at home and revive the sense of loyalty and discipline throughout the body politic. Following two bloody coups and the erosion of confidence between and among the various groups that made up the country, one could only pray for the sympathy and understanding of our neighbours and colleagues. And this we did receive and very promptly.

The Presidents of the Cameroon and Niger were the first to visit Nigeria and their example was soon followed by other West African and African leaders. I began a series of 'Know Your Neighbour' tours which soon took me to our immediate neighbours and even further afield. In this way we began to build a new sense of trust and confidence and had no difficulty thereafter in winning support from our neighbours for our initiatives; indeed, reviewing the speeches of Tafawa Balewa, it is clear that we were both working towards the same end. The more senior leaders of the region, who had worked closely with the former Nigerian Prime Minister, could once again relate to our policy without difficulty.

The support of these leaders would be critical during the years of civil conflict that were to follow. During 1966 and early 1967 Nigeria was moving towards the internal conflict that would absorb most of our attention and energies until its conclusion in 1970. In that time the Federal Military Government welcomed any initiative that might lead towards the creation of a West African Economic Community and participated, as actively as events would permit, in all the meetings and conferences designed to further that end.

We were primarily concerned, however, with ending the domestic crisis, as it was (and remains) our belief that the greatest contribution we could make at that time to the cause of regional integration and African unity and the independence of the African states, was a strong and united Nigeria under effective central leadership. The disintegration of Nigeria would have robbed black Africa of an influential and respected voice in international affairs and the result would have been a considerable addition to the African population living at a subsistence level and in conditions of economic dependency.

The civil war in Nigeria was a major test of our diplomacy and of the loyalty of our immediate Francophone neighbours who, despite the very considerable pressures on them, from France and some of her closest African clients, nevertheless remained true allies of Nigeria and firm in their commitment to the Charter of the OAU. At the end of June 1967 Houphouët-Boigny had already confided to General de Gaulle his growing concern about the deterioration in the political situation within Africa, notably in Nigeria. He again saw de Gaulle briefly in March 1968, when the question, then pending, of relations between France and Guinea was apparently not discussed - but the "problem of Nigeria" was! <sup>2/</sup>

The Ivory Coast and France were both anxious about the growing economic strength of Nigeria and were not averse to exploiting her internal tensions. But support for secession was contrary to the spirit and the letter of the OAU Charter, as was intervention in the affairs of an independent, sovereign state. Unless the rebellion had a reasonably good chance of success there was, therefore, little point in needlessly offending the great majority of African leaders.

Presumably for tactical reasons, then, the Ivory Coast preferred to postpone any independent action leaving the responsibility to another African state, better qualified perhaps by reason of its radical and socialist orientation, its previous British associations and its geographical location - remote from West Africa. Julius Nyerere of Tanzania was the first to recognise the secessionist regime in April 1967 with support, shortly afterwards, from Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia. <sup>3/</sup> Only then did the Ivory Coast leader issue a statement, from Switzerland, approving Nyerere's

decision as "an act of great political courage" - while declining to take an official stand himself until his return to the Ivory Coast, <sup>4/</sup> presumably to avoid the accusation of colluding with or being manipulated by France on this issue.

Houphouët-Boigny was clearly aware of the sentiments of our Francophone neighbours and in particular of Niger, a member of the Entente. Diori had earlier insisted that "there is no question of Niger recognising Biafra", and the Presidents of Mali and Upper Volta had likewise confirmed their opposition to such a move. <sup>5/</sup> Upper Volta was, like Niger, a member of the Entente and General Lamizana was uncompromising in his condemnation of secession.

It seems to us that ... just at a time when we are trying to form larger and more coherent groupings, the break-up of Nigeria is an example neither to be encouraged nor imitated. <sup>6/</sup>

According to Modibo Keita it would be:

A very serious precedent for the political unity of every country. Mali's position is clear. At a time when we are discussing African unity, a grouping of the African peoples, it seems inconsistent to encourage secession on a tribal basis. <sup>7/</sup>

The strong stand taken so promptly by Niger and Upper Volta was a serious setback for the Ivory Coast - which in any case had yet to give official recognition to "Biafra" - and for the unity of the Entente. In May, President Ahidjo of Cameroon likewise indicated "there was no question of recognising Biafra"; <sup>8/</sup> and, given his country's proximity

to our own Eastern Region, that support was invaluable for without it the rebellion might have continued much longer than it did. Among the Francophone states Houphouët-Boigny's only support came from his close colleague, President Bongo of Gabon, who began by appealing for "prudence" and "patience", insisting that it was "still too soon to talk about it", but concluded that "many African states would want to give serious consideration to the public stand just taken by M.Houphouët-Boigny." <sup>9/</sup>

After several meetings with Houphouët-Boigny, in Paris, Bongo declared in May 1968 that "it was utopian to believe that Nigeria with its fifty million inhabitants, could remain in its present form." <sup>10/</sup> Recognition of Biafra by Gabon followed two days later. Doubtless frustrated at the failure of his other colleagues to respond, Houphouët-Boigny next day gave vent to his "indigation" about the "incomprehensible and culpable indifference of the entire world" concerning the war then taking place with "Biafra". <sup>11/</sup> But it was mid-May before the Ivory Coast was itself ready to accord official recognition to the regime, <sup>12/</sup> and it was another two months before there was any indication in the Ivory Coast of popular support for the President's stand. One French journalist wrote of an impression of "general indifference". <sup>13/</sup>

There was a conference of all five Entente leaders, in July 1968, in an effort to harmonise their position on Nigeria before the scheduled meeting of the OAU Consultative Committee that had been set up to examine the question. It was already clear, however, that the new military President of Togo, Etienne Eyadema, and the Presidents of Upper Volta and Niger remained convinced that recognition of "Biafra" was not the correct policy. <sup>14/</sup>



Even President Emile . Zinsou of Dahomey would soon admit that "it is a delicate and difficult problem", insisting that his government was "against the secession and against the war".<sup>15/</sup> At the end of September he again repeated his opposition to secession, trying to justify his country's aid for "Biafra" on "humanitarian" grounds.<sup>16/</sup>

Elsewhere in West Africa President Senghor was anxious to mediate in the Nigerian conflict but, mindful perhaps of his country's large Moslem majority, and the close bonds linking the populations of the Sahel, and aware of his role and status as a founder-member of the OAU, he steadfastly declined to support the cause of secession. Senegal could not, on the other hand, stand aside and ignore developments in Nigeria which "seriously call into question the basis of our action for African unity".<sup>17/</sup> In July 1968 Sékou Touré of Guinea openly criticised the Ivory Coast leader maintaining that, but for the discovery of oil in Eastern Nigeria, "there would not be so many ready to talk of humanitarian problems in Nigeria when those same people could apparently, and with a good conscience, remain silent over Vietnam." <sup>18/</sup>

Despite the perhaps unexpectedly weak response to the orchestrated campaign for recognition of "Biafra" and dismemberment of Nigeria, and despite the evident misgivings of the Quai d'Orsay in Paris, General de Gaulle at a press conference in September 1968 revealed that his government had "in so far as we are able", been assisting "Biafra", but that it had so far refrained from recognising that regime since it considered that "the administration of Africa is, above all, a matter for the Africans." While some East African states - in fact two, Tanzania and Zambia - had

recognised "Biafra", "others seem to be moving in that direction"; France had not taken such a stand but might yet do so. In conclusion, General de Gaulle suggested that Confederation might be preferable to civil war. <sup>19/</sup>

But the African answer to the diplomatic activity of the Ivory Coast, and that of France, designed to split Nigeria into units that could more easily be accommodated within the West African pattern of small Francophone states, came at the Algiers summit of the OAU, also in September 1968. There, after an eloquent opening address by the Chairman, Houari Boumedienne, the African states voted overwhelmingly for a Nigerian-sponsored resolution, with only four states approving a motion sympathetic to "Biafra" - Tanzania, Zambia, the Ivory Coast and Gabon - and two abstentions, Botswana and Ruanda. <sup>20/</sup>

The Ivory Coast was the only West African state to oppose us in this way. It seemed that General de Gaulle's statement, far from rallying Francophone support for the Ivory Coast position, may even have alienated some English-speaking states, until then undecided. The great majority of leaders attending, however, were convinced either by Nigerian diplomacy, Boumedienne's uncompromising statement of principle at the opening session, or simply the realisation that every African state was vulnerable to secession.

After the Algiers summit one of Houphouët-Boigny's closest colleagues openly criticised his stand. President Tsiranana of Madagascar summed up the feeling of the meeting by insisting that "African unity begins with the unity of each state". <sup>21/</sup> President Ould Daddah of Mauritania, himself

an experienced jurist, concluded that "we cannot renounce the principle of the territorial status quo set out in the Charter of the OAU." <sup>22/</sup>

The diplomatic campaign to destroy Nigeria seemed to have reached a dead end, just as the civil war was itself drawing at last to a conclusion.

Already African (and European) leaders were beginning to look ahead and revise their views about the likely role of a re-united and prosperous Nigeria within an African and West African context. Houphouët-Boigny received no additional support at the OCAM conference in Kinshasa in January 1969. The next month he was again received in Paris by General de Gaulle who, having now presumably decided against formal recognition of "Biafra", nevertheless commended the Ivory Coast President as "the champion of a just and noble cause, that of 'Biafra', for which we give you our unqualified support." <sup>23/</sup>

It was encouraging that only one country in our region actually supported the secession in Nigeria - which resulted in a break in diplomatic relations between ourselves and the Ivory Coast. And even the Ivory Coast only became deeply involved in the Nigerian crisis after May 1968 - while attempting at first to shelter behind the views of East African leaders who were poorly placed to understand or appreciate the real nature of our problems. Otherwise the West African region remained more or less intact and pulled together remarkably well during the crisis. The movement towards regional integration continued, with our full support, until Houphouët-Boigny's recognition of the rebel regime made it difficult for the Ivory Coast to continue to participate in conferences attended by Nigeria.

While the Ivory Coast remained isolated in this way within West Africa, there were certain other countries in the region whose support for us was increasingly uncertain, from 1968 onwards, notably Sierra Leone under Sir Siaka Stevens, Ghana under Dr. Kofi Busia, and Dahomey under Dr. Emile Zinsou. Where Moslem opinion in West Africa was overwhelmingly favourable to the cause of One Nigeria and to the Federal Military Government, the Christian populations of the coastal states were more ambivalent in their attitude, including many who were sympathetic to their co-religionists in Eastern Nigeria, irrespective of the real issues at stake. This was the case in Sierra Leone where Siaka Stevens, the new Prime Minister after April 1968, not only inherited many political and economic problems from his predecessor, but, as a result of the country's recent experience of military intervention and the subsequent break-down of discipline within the army, had grown exceedingly wary of military commanders and of military governments in general. Perhaps for this reason too he proved more responsive to the "Biafran" leaders, civil and military than to the Federal Military Government of Nigeria.

The secessionists were given a base in Sierra Leone and seem to have enjoyed exceptional rights of entry into and exit from the country and its capital. Criticism of Nigeria's policy from the Sierra Leone delegation of the OAU summits of 1968 (Algiers) and 1969 (Addis Ababa) would provoke me into a somewhat harsh reply at the latter conference. Moreover there were clear indications that, by January 1970, Sierra Leone prepared a recorded statement for transmission by the BBC which, had it been delivered, would very seriously have damaged relations between Sierra Leone and Nigeria. Instead the rebellion in Nigeria collapsed on January 12 and the Federal Government formally accepted the "Biafran" surrender on January 15.

Nigeria's relations with Ghana, never very cordial under Nkrumah, improved greatly with the formation of military governments in both countries early in 1966. It is true that our contacts with General Ankrah, the first Ghanaian military Head of State, became strained in the early years of the civil war, largely as a result of his somewhat patronising and even hectoring manner, particularly at meetings of the OAU Consultative Committee which was trying to help us resolve our national problem. There he increasingly gave the impression of wishing to dictate terms to the Federal Military Government. However, relations with his successor, General Afrifa, who replaced him in 1969, were extremely cordial, helped perhaps by our similar background and our common experience at Sandhurst where he, too, had been an officer cadet.

It was only late in 1969, after the military had withdrawn in favour of elections and a new civilian government had been formed under Kofi Busia, that Ghana's attitude to the Nigerian civil war began to give us some cause for concern. More serious, however, was the decision by the Ghanaian government in late 1969 and early 1970 to expel, at very short notice, all foreigners living and working in the country, including perhaps as many as half a million Nigerians. Coinciding as it did with the end of the civil war and the beginnings of reconstruction and re-settlement, it seemed to point the need for greater cooperation among West African governments, while at the same time making that cooperation even more difficult to obtain.

The major success of Nigeria's earlier diplomacy was the steadfast support of our immediate neighbours who might otherwise have been tempted to align themselves with the Ivory Coast and France. Here ..

our only misgivings in the course of the war concerned the attitude of Dahomey and then only briefly during the administration of Dr. Emile Zinsou in 1968-9. But even he rejected secession as a solution to Nigeria's problems although, under pressure from France and from international agencies like the Red Cross and Caritas, engaged in humanitarian operations, he did make available facilities within his country for relief supplies to the rebel enclave - to which we strongly objected on security grounds while suggesting alternative arrangements. Given the cooperation and understanding shown by neighbouring countries through the civil war, West Africa was saved the prospect of a deep and damaging rift that would otherwise have severely restricted future cooperation within the region. After the war our task of effecting reconciliation at home and abroad was the more easily encompassed and, with the assistance of Togo, we were then able to take up the question of regional integration, interrupted after the Monrovia conference of April 1968.

## 2. West Africa after the Nkrumah Regime

The Nigerian civil war was the most important, but by no means the only source of tension within the region after 1965. The overthrow of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana, in February 1966, within a month of the Nigerian coup, and the emergence of a military government under General Ankrah not only overturned the earlier partnership between Guinea and Ghana, but also aggravated the already poor relations between Guinea and the Ivory Coast, while at the same time improving the prospects for cooperation between the Ivory Coast and Ghana.

Guinea, Ghana and the Entente

Nkrumah was given sanctuary in Guinea, where he was welcomed as joint leader of the Union of African States, although his political responsibilities in Guinea seem to have been negligible and much of his time was spent writing and travelling abroad. Meanwhile Sékou Touré threatened to restore Nkrumah to power in Ghana, using force if necessary and, presumably, routing his army through the Ivory Coast.<sup>24/</sup> The threat, as Houphouët-Boigny later conceded, was barely credible, although the Ivory Coast troops were nevertheless despatched to the frontiers where they remained until April - and where they were poorly placed to imitate the example of their colleagues in Ghana.

Among the Entente partners, however, there was a clear sense of crisis in February and March 1966, as Houphouët-Boigny hastily sought assurances from the French and from his colleagues in the Entente that in the event of an invasion by Guinea they would honour the terms of their mutual defence agreements.<sup>25/</sup> But by mid-April the Ivory Coast President was sufficiently reassured to dismiss the threat of invasion as "a lot of hot air from Sékou Touré" who had, he claimed, neither the roads, the transport, nor the supplies necessary to sustain a military expedition on a sufficient scale and in hostile territory.<sup>26/</sup> In any case Guinea had more than enough problems policing its frontier with Guinea-Bissau, where Touré was supporting the nationalist PAIGC against the Portuguese. The Ivory Coast army was finally withdrawn to barracks after April.

The coup in Ghana greatly strengthened the unity of the Entente, at least for the present, and also enabled Togo to make its formal entry into the grouping as a full member, in June, 1966. After independence Togo had felt increasingly threatened by a territorial dispute with Ghana, with rival and ever more ambitious claims being advanced by both sides. As a former trusteeship territory, administered partly by Britain and partly by France, and because of Britain's ties with Ghana, the Togolese leadership had looked to the Ivory Coast and the Francophone states to guarantee the country's security.

The issue with Ghana had arisen as a product of colonial rule and the division of the coastal Ewe population between the two adjacent states. On the eve of Ghana's independence, following a UN sponsored referendum, there was a further transfer of territory and population - with the incorporation within Ghana of British-administered Togoland and its Ewe population. Then, with the independence of French Togoland, there developed among the Ewe of Ghana a counter movement - to join or rejoin their compatriots in what was now the Republic of Togo.

The territorial dispute, which continues unresolved to the present, has occasionally threatened the peace of the sub-region, most notably in the period just before and after the assassination of the first Togolese President, Sylvanus Olympio, himself an Ewe, in 1963. However, despite the importance of the Francophone connection and the sense of assurance and the financial assistance that it brings, the long-term interest of Togo has been rather to exploit its strategic location between Nigeria and Ghana and to promote détente in the sub-region as a condition for increased inter-state trade.



Thus the new leadership after 1963 was under considerable domestic pressure, not least from commercially-minded Ewe constituents, not to antagonise the Nkrumah government unnecessarily by accepting membership of the Entente. But, with the removal of Nkrumah, Togo could balance the future prospects of a potential grouping of Benin states, incorporating both Nigeria and Ghana, against membership in the existing Entente, where a possible Ghanaian presence was already receiving serious consideration. Her preferred strategy was to join the Entente, while exploiting her distinctive colonial background to develop useful political and economic connections across linguistic barriers - with other African states, notably Nigeria and Ghana, and with a variety of West European and international partners.

The new rulers in Ghana were anxious for a speedy rapprochement with the Ivory Coast. There was talk of fraternal cooperation, while the military government spoke of the need for tolerance among the African states and acceptance of the principles of the OAU Charter - clearly designed to distance the new regime from its civilian predecessor. All outstanding differences between Ghana and the Ivory Coast seemed finally to have been settled with the despatch of a good-will mission from Accra to Abidjan, accompanied by the exiled "King of the Sanwis", whose pretensions to independence from the Ivory Coast had been encouraged by Nkrumah, but who was subsequently pardoned by Houphouët-Boigny. <sup>27/</sup>

Under pressure from some of the Ivory Coast's partners, the Entente agreed, in April, to strengthen cooperation with the new government in Ghana, <sup>28/</sup> but there was no indication that the Ivory Coast government

saw Ghana as anything but a serious economic rival, whose inclusion in the Entente would directly threaten their own leading position. Where Hamani Diori of Niger, then president of the Entente, at first welcomed the prospect of Ghana's membership, he soon qualified that support : "it is clear that the Ghanaian economy is a reality that we have to take into account." <sup>29/</sup>

It took weeks of hard bargaining before the frontier between Ghana and the Ivory Coast was finally re-opened - having been closed long before by Nkrumah. Another factor preventing a closer rapprochement between the two regimes was Houphouët-Boigny's rejection of military rule as an acceptable and permanent pattern of government in West Africa. It was not until the military in Ghana had withdrawn, in 1969, in favour of an elected civilian government under Dr. Kofi Busia, that relations between the two countries did improve markedly.

Following Nkrumah's removal, the government in Guinea found itself increasingly isolated, although numerous African states did voice their opposition to military intervention as a means of resolving political and social problems. Even Modibo Keita of Mali, a former member of the Union of African States, gave no visible encouragement to Touré's proposal to resolve the issue by force. <sup>30/</sup>

Diplomatic relations were severed with the new military rulers in Ghana, which was the reason for Guinea's absence from the Accra meeting of the West African Regional Group, in April/May 1967, despite her

enthusiastic support for the principle of African unity. It was also the explanation for Guinea's subsequent failure to sign and ratify the Articles of Association of the Group, approved at the Accra conference. Guinea was, nevertheless, represented at the Monrovia meeting the following year, together with Ghana, after energetic mediation by the Liberian President. It is probable that Guinea was the more anxious to attend in 1968 given, not only the change of venue and her good relations with Liberia, but also the knowledge that all but one of the Entente states would boycott the proceedings.

Guinea's relations with the Ivory Coast, consistently bad in the past, continued to deteriorate after Nkrumah's removal as Touré threatened military action to restore him to power. After February 1967 citizens of both countries were detained in a series of retaliatory moves that threatened to escalate into something even more serious, particularly with the seizure of Guinea's Minister of Foreign Affairs and other prominent nationals, while in transit at Abidjan airport. <sup>31/</sup>

It was July 1967, however, before the Ivory Coast would agree a meeting with Guinea to settle this, the most urgent of their many outstanding disputes - and that was only after protracted efforts by President Tubman, assisted by Hamani Diori and Modibo Keita. <sup>32/</sup> An exchange of detainees finally took place in September accompanied by renewed attacks by Touré on his former political patron. <sup>33/</sup>

#### Guinea and the Senegal River Organisation

Meanwhile, in June 1966, Touré had contributed to his growing isolation by attacking Senghor - whose country had received perhaps as

many as 300,000 immigrants, refugees from Guinea who were unwilling or unable to return home.<sup>34/</sup> Guinea and Senegal were also divided by their support for rival nationalist movements in Guinea-Bissau, while Senegal's threats forcibly to incorporate the newly independent and English-speaking Gambia encouraged closer ties between that small state and Guinea.

By October 1966 relations between Senegal and Guinea were reported to have been "frozen" at the insistence of Senghor.<sup>35/</sup> In January 1967 Guinea formally suspended its participation in the Inter-State Committee that administered the affairs of the Senegal River Basin Organisation - on the grounds that "Guinea cannot cooperate with M.Senghor until such time as his positions reflect the defence of African and Senegalese interests rather than that of French policy towards the African countries."<sup>36/</sup>

A resumption of sub-regional cooperation by Guinea was made conditional on a pledge from the other three member-states that they would not in future allow foreign powers to disrupt their fraternal relations.<sup>37/</sup> However, as the four leaders of the sub-regional body had not met together since before February 1965 and the creation of OCAM, Touré's ultimatum had no more effect than his suspension of Guinea's participation.

Guinea's uncertain presence in the Senegal River Basin Group had been, and would remain the principal reason for the group's turbulent history which, in turn, retarded its economic progress. Where Guinea's geographical situation, potential wealth and importance as a market made it a most desirable partner, particularly for the more developed Senegal, its inclusion also demanded a more ambitious prospectus (and greater funds)

than development of the Senegal River along most of its length would otherwise have warranted. But the main reasons for Guinea's inclusion were as much political as economic, with their origins in the rivalry between Senegal and the Ivory Coast, as the former struggled to retain its primacy among the Francophone states of the region.

Guinea's defection from the French camp in 1958 was, as we have seen, a serious blow to Senghor and his ambitions for regional, if not African leadership. Guinea's membership of the Senegal River Group was designed to help restore the *status quo ante* and redress the political and economic balance within the region in favour of Senegal. However, where Senghor may have hoped to tame a difficult and often intractable neighbour and hasten Guinea's return to the Francophone alliance, Touré probably saw the River Basin Organisation rather as an extended base for his own radical options and a potential source of allies. Such contrasting calculations were not a promising basis for lasting cooperation.

Touré's isolation, both regional and sub-regional, was all the more complete given the contrasting evolution at this time of his socialist neighbour, Mali. In December 1966, as Touré's relations with Senegal deteriorated, Modibo Keita made his first visit to Dakar since the break-up of the Mali Federation in August 1960.<sup>38/</sup> Mali was now seeking, largely for economic reasons, to renew its collaboration with France and with its Francophone neighbours.

Senghor, himself, had every interest in supporting this move since the Senegalese economy needed the stimulus that could only be

provided by economic cooperation within the sub-region. During 1967 there were prolonged discussions between representatives of the French and Mali governments aimed at facilitating Mali's return to the Franc Zone, if not her immediate reintegration into the West African Monetary Union (UMOA). <sup>39/</sup>

It may have been the example of Mali, or the near suspension of American financial aid to Guinea during 1967, which provoked the apparent reversal of that country's policy in October 1967. At the eighth congress of the Democratic Party of Guinea (PDG), Touré made his much publicised speech indicating his willingness to "reestablish an honest and fruitful cooperation with France." <sup>40/</sup> There had been similar overtures at the beginning of the decade but they had been quickly overtaken by events in Guinea itself, and in the rest of Africa. This new statement was, however, the first in a series of attempts by Guinea to escape from its isolation and to come to terms with the French government and with its Francophone neighbours.

Senghor promptly seized the opportunity to re-launch his sub-regional enterprise and November 1967 saw the first meeting since 1964 of the four Heads of the Senegal River Basin Organisation. The meeting, a very cordial one, took place at Bamako, in Mali, where, according to Keita, "it was a question of associating the members around a programme of economic development" aimed not only at the exploitation of the Senegal River Basin, but eventually at securing "total economic integration within the framework of the sub-regional grouping." <sup>41/</sup> Events moved quickly thereafter as the four leaders at last found it possible to concert their activities and to agree common goals.

In March 1968 the Senegal River Organisation (OERS) was formally established at another summit meeting of the four leaders, this time in Labe, Guinea, where Touré in his opening address maintained the earlier emphasis on unity and integration. And at the end of the proceedings he reminded his colleagues that they were now firmly committed to the cause of unification. "First and foremost the citizens of Senegal, Mali, Mauritania and Guinea are citizens of the OERS", and henceforth "nothing must be done that is contrary to the interests of all four states." <sup>42/</sup>

In April Touré would take the opportunity of an official visit to Guinea by his colleague, Keita, to suggest publicly a union of their two states to form "one and the same nation, one and the same state". Keita pledged Mali's support for union but, doubtless recalling the unfortunate experience of the Mali Federation, reminded his host that, to be successful, it would require "a solid preparation". <sup>43/</sup>

But it was Senghor who was particularly concerned to maintain the pressure for unity and cooperation. It was probably at his prompting that, after the Bamako meeting of November 1967, the four heads of the sub-regional group signed a joint letter to interested governments in the region indicating that they viewed their small community as the nucleus of a wider economic grouping. It was:

Their major preoccupation to extend our cooperation through the creation of a Regional Group embracing the whole of the West African States. It is increasingly necessary for our peoples to constitute viable economic and political entities and it is this that leads us to reaffirm our determination to face up to the task of creating a Regional Group.

The success of Senghor's scheme, however, depended on his ability to overcome General de Gaulle's antipathy to Touré, while allaying Touré's intense suspicions of France, with which he had severed diplomatic relations in 1965. Where Guinea, confronted by growing economic difficulties and an acute shortage of capital, had taken the initiative in October 1967 in seeking a reconciliation with France, Senghor worked hard on Touré's (and Senegal's) behalf in Paris in the Spring of 1968 - just as earlier he had facilitated the return of Mali to its former allegiance. But Mali had not broken all ties with the Metropole in the way that Guinea had. And it was soon evident that, where Guinea was concerned, reconciliation with France would, at the very least, be conditional on reconciliation with the Ivory Coast.

As Houphouët-Boigny had little, if anything, to gain and much to lose from such an accommodation, Senghor's strategy had little chance of succeeding - certainly not while Jacques Foccart, now very close to the Ivory Coast leader, remained at the Elysée Palace as Secretary-General for African and Malagasy Affairs. There was official scepticism in France and the Ivory Coast about Touré's motives in seeking to improve relations with the formerly despised Metropole. Paris claimed to see it as a ploy to obtain the resumption of American aid - and at its previous generous level. <sup>45/</sup>

It is also possible that Senghor did not improve his chances by raising with Houphouët-Boigny and with the French President the proposed formation of the West African Regional Group, although as envisaged by Senghor and his allies, the Group would include both the



Entente and the Senegal River Organisation, providing a secure institutional framework with a fairly safe Francophone majority. <sup>46/</sup> French critics may not have been so easily convinced about the cohesion and effectiveness of that majority. And, given its subsequent attitude, it is unlikely that the French government would have relaxed its traditional opposition to collaboration of any kind across former colonial boundaries - where it did not directly serve the interests of France.

The failure of Senghor's mediation between Guinea and France, and the renewed differences between the two following General de Gaulle's public endorsement of "Biafran" secession, re-kindled the earlier antagonisms among the French-speaking states of West Africa. Touré's isolation was practically complete following the military coup in Mali, in November 1968, and the removal of his colleague, Modibo Keita. <sup>47/</sup> Although careful at first not to condemn the enterprise, by January 1969 Touré was accusing France and other OCAM countries of complicity in the coup and of a further plot to eliminate himself. <sup>48/</sup>

In February 1969 he resumed his attacks on General de Gaulle and criticised the "undignified" conduct of certain African leaders who were only too ready to visit Paris to solicit favours. "In France they are well aware that Guinea is no beggar." <sup>49/</sup> There was evidence that same year of collaboration between individual army officers in Guinea and the Portuguese authorities in neighbouring Guinea-Bissau. But, in the light of evidence later uncovered in Lisbon, there is no doubt that Portugal was heavily involved in the abortive invasion of Conakry in November 1970, using Guinean exiles, perhaps with French complicity.

The break with Senegal at the end of 1970 was real, if never quite complete, as Senghor refused to comply with Touré's demand for the extradition of exiles condemned in their absence in Guinea for their alleged role in the invasion. <sup>50/</sup> By December 1971 Senghor was ready to confirm the collapse of the OERS, after the prolonged and continuing absence of Guinea from the organisation's ruling councils. <sup>51/</sup> Even the patient, unrelenting efforts of President Ould Daddah had failed to effect any reconciliation.

The only available option was to reform the organisation, with three rather than the original four members, and with suitable revised objectives - this time confined to the development of the river basin itself and excluding the more ambitious proposals for the complete economic integration of the sub-region. And that was the decision later confirmed at a meeting of the Council of Ministers of the OERS, in Nouakchott at the end of 1971.

The situation in West Africa after 1966 was not then conducive to schemes of political cooperation and economic integration, whether regional or sub-regional. The Entente was deeply divided over its attitude to the Nigerian civil war, with the Ivory Coast all but isolated and enjoying only the moral support of Dahomey, which was anything but certain. After a brief and spectacular revival, in 1967, which incidentally gave a much-needed boost to earlier proposals for West African integration, the Senegal River Basin Organisation failed to survive the end of the decade.

It was a decade, moreover, that had begun with the independence and then the collapse of the Mali Federation, followed by that of the Franco-African Community, all projects with which the Senegalese leader had been, at one time or another, closely associated.<sup>52/</sup> The West African Regional Group was itself a victim of the civil war in Nigeria, the renewed divisions among the Francophone states elsewhere in the region, and the continuing hostility of the French, determined to preserve and strengthen their own influence within black Africa. It was now more than ever clear that regional integration in West Africa would depend for its success not only on the return of peace to Nigeria, but also on the ability of other African states to determine their own future in the context of national interest rather than the interests, political and economic, of the former Metropole.

#### "Francophonie"

While the Nigerian civil war was a major obstacle to West African integration in the short-term, a more serious, long-term problem was the close - and one-sided - relationship between France and her former colonies in the region. The end of the civil war was but one condition for the successful creation of a regional economic community; a second condition was the relaxation of the French *présence* in West Africa and, indeed, in Africa as a whole.

It was General de Gaulle's policy to strengthen and expand the Metropole's influence in black Africa and that policy survived his

resignation in 1969 and continued under his successor, Georges Pompidou. However, the brief inter-regnum provided by the Senate President, Alain Poher, in 1969, offered a foretaste of things to come when the Secretary-General for African and Malagasy Affairs, Jacques Foccart, was temporarily removed from the Elysee Palace; but he would be replaced finally only in 1974, after the election as President of the Conservative leader Giscard d'Estaing.

Despite the impression of continuity in French policy, events in the 'sixties were not altogether reassuring for those Francophone states who, above all else, feared a reduction or cessation of French economic aid and technical assistance. De Gaulle's re-election in 1965 gave some guarantee of continued French investment, cooperation and perhaps even military support. However, the large vote for de Gaulle's opponents on the first ballot, the uncertain outcome of the 1967 legislative elections, and the brief paralysis of the administration following the first "events" of May 1968, emphasised the precarious nature of a regime so dependent, apparently, on a single personality.

Meanwhile the French government was under growing domestic pressure to reduce the level of its economic commitments abroad. The apparent indifference or hostility of many French to the predicament of their former colonies, expressed through the doctrines of *Cartierisme*, were a constant source of anxiety to her Francophone allies in Africa, as was de Gaulle's express endeavour to retain influence, and his new campaign to counter Anglo-Saxon influence in the Americas. Moreover, severe cuts in the French budget for overseas aid and cooperation were inevitable in the

aftermath of May 1968, given the demands for increased domestic spending to alleviate the social unrest.

There was also the growing reluctance of the French authorities to commit troops in support of African leaders under pressure at home. There was the abrupt reversal of France's traditional alliances in the Middle East - in 1967, if not before, - and in any case well in advance of most of the Francophone African leaders who would retain their links with Israel until 1973, when economic and other considerations forced a revision of their policy.

Finally, there was the unexpected and controversial decision to devalue, taken at the end of 1969, after de Gaulle's departure from office, and without prior consultation with France's partners in the Franc Zone. All of these pointed the way to a very different relationship between France and her former African territories during the next decade. De Gaulle's defeat in the 1969 referendum merely accelerated the French demise as did his subsequent death, and that of Pompidou in 1974.

Where economic assistance and technical cooperation was the central consideration for most, if not all, the Francophone African leaders, Houphouët-Boigny and Senghor had more ambitious designs - which apparently required the approval and support of the French President. By 1967, as Nigeria moved towards civil war, the Ivory Coast leader wanted French backing to help secure our division into several smaller states, more compatible with the size and resources of his own country and with his ambitions for leadership within the region.

Senghor at the same time wanted de Gaulle's support for the creation of an international Francophone community, or "Commonwealth", with active French participation, wherein he might play a leading role. While Senghor withheld his support from the first scheme, Houphouët-Boigny was privately critical of the second - although, as further evidence of their recent reconciliation, neither would openly disavow the other's proposals.

In neither case was it clear, however, to the French that their interests would be served by precipitate (or indeed any) action, and de Gaulle, receiving conflicting advice, was content to leave the initiative to the African leaders themselves. When he did intervene it was not in quite the way that the African leaders had wanted or expected. His outspoken support for self-determination for the French-speaking population of Quebec, in 1967, while failing to arrest his own government's declining popularity at home, seriously damaged France's credibility abroad - most notable with multi-lingual states such as Canada, Belgium and Switzerland, all possible members of a Francophone community. It would take all the good sense of the Canadian Federal Government and the combined efforts of such prominent Francophone leaders as Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia, Senghor and Diori, to mend the diplomatic breach.

General de Gaulle's late intervention in Nigerian affairs the following year in support of secession but withholding French recognition of "Biafra", was likewise counter-productive, and left the

French and the Ivory Coast governments no option in the end but to come to terms with the Federal Military Government of Nigeria. Again our Francophone neighbours had exerted themselves, firstly to prevent an outright diplomatic break between ourselves and France, and to dissuade the French President from his proposed course of action, and later to effect a reconciliation as soon as possible.

De Gaulle's distrust of the Anglo-Saxon powers, already obvious during his visits to Canada and the Americas, and in his attitude to former British territories like Nigeria and Ghana, was again in evidence a month after his celebrated "*Vive le Québec Libre*" speech. In August 1967 he made it clear that France would not agree to Britain's entry to the European Common Market. When Harold Wilson nevertheless persisted with his application for British membership, the French Foreign Minister delayed consideration of the request by the Community until de Gaulle, apparently anticipating the decision of his European colleagues, delivered his formal veto at a press conference in December.

That decision, coming after the meeting in Dakar of the Council of Ministers of the proposed West African Regional Group, and just before the OCAM summit in Niamey and the critical Monrovia conference of the Regional Group, may well have reinforced the Ivory Coast and its Entente allies in their view that association across linguistic lines was desirable (and practicable) only in certain very restricted fields. It was paradoxical that, after 1965, when French policies and events in Africa itself were pushing many of the Francophone leaders towards a more independent political line, and towards diversification of their political and economic ties,

African leaders, such as Presidents Bourguiba and Senghor, should have expended so much effort in promoting a new association of Francophone states, similar in many, but not all respects, to the British Commonwealth.

Senghor was concerned, as ever, to maintain close ties between Africa and Europe - particularly with France. Bourguiba was at the same time also anxious to repair diplomatic relations with France, disrupted by his government's resumption of European estates in May 1964. Neither had the same conception of the future community since Bourguiba, perhaps in deference to his Maghreb neighbours, wished to confine it, at least initially, to the area of technical (and educational) cooperation, while Senghor hoped for a broader cultural and economic community and resisted proposals to separate out the various aspects of cooperation.

Both, however, were anxious to get a definite commitment to the scheme from the French. But support in France was patchy at best and came at first from politicians and economic groups closer, perhaps, to the Conservative than to the Gaullist leaders.<sup>53/</sup> Nevertheless, the leading French protagonists of *Francophonie* were able to tap the historical ties between de Gaulle, Gaullism, and former French Africa.

*Francophonie* was discussed at the OCAM summit in Madagascar in June 1966, when Senghor outlined his proposal for a community to comprise black African states, Madagascar and the Maghreb countries, together with Belgium, Switzerland and Canada, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. The suggestion seems to have won general approval, although African leaders were almost as reserved in their comments as was the French government itself.<sup>54/</sup>



Nor was it clear precisely what kind of framework Senghor had in mind since this would clearly depend on the nature and extent of the French commitment, to say nothing of the character of the association as a whole. The apparent lack of enthusiasm on the part of the French President was ascribed to his sense of "discretion" : it was a matter for Africans themselves and it was not his place to appear to be dictating to them. France was said to have "a certain interest" but the initiative must come from the African leaders themselves. <sup>55/</sup>

Certainly no one in Africa wanted to revive the French Community in its old form - the sense of nationalism and independence was already too strong. It was largely anxiety about their deteriorating economic situation and uncertainty about the future direction of French policy when de Gaulle was no longer there that provided what support there was in Africa for the Senghor/Bourguiba proposals. The Francophone leaders were reluctant, as yet, to see the advantages of inter-African trade and cooperation as an alternative to continued dependence on France - although it was already clear that a number of them, at least, entertained serious doubts about the wisdom of the latter policy.

Efforts by OCAM's President, Diori, to sell the idea of a Francophone community to the Algerian government met with a rebuff. President Boumedienne insisted that his country would retain its independent culture and values and expressed concern about any move that would "impair the unity that must regulate relationships among the newly independent countries." <sup>56/</sup> Morocco, although seeking better relations with France after the Ben Barka scandal of 1964, had serious reservations about the

proposed community, as did Mauritania which had left OCAM in 1965 after that organisation had assumed political as well as economic responsibilities. <sup>57/</sup>

Guinea was even less receptive and, in January 1967, Touré described *francophonie* as "an attempt to betray African interests. All states, all governments that betray Africa will pay dearly for it;" it was an attempt to maintain in economic subjection countries that were trying to free themselves from the colonial yoke. <sup>58/</sup> It was also said that even in Central Africa "no one is unaware of the lack of enthusiasm of the Cameroonian leaders" <sup>59/</sup> not surprising, perhaps, in a country that was itself bi-lingual in composition and therefore unwilling to be integrated into a purely French-speaking community.

There seems to have been little or no response from the Indo-chinese countries and the problems of attracting support from the multi-lingual European states and Canada were not alleviated by de Gaulle's trenchant pronouncements about the right of cultural minorities to self-determination. Nevertheless, the Canadian government did enjoy good relations with a number of African states, including Tunisia, Tanzania and later Niger, while the Belgians retained their former interest (and investments) in Zaire and Central Africa, while extending their economic support to several other African countries, one of which was Tunisia.

By the middle of 1968 the question of *francophonie* was overtaken by the more pressing question of the Nigerian civil war which found the Francophone leaders themselves divided, with the Ivory Coast and its allies in a clear minority. The difficulty of reaching consensus on political issues such as Nigeria meant that OCAM had voluntarily to delete such matters from

its formal agenda, although they continued to be discussed informally. Some such compromise was inevitable after Mauritania's departure in 1965 and given the open reluctance of Congo-Brazzaville, under socialist leadership, to approve a draft Charter for the organisation that would in any way limit the country's political options.

OCAM also confronted other problems in the late 'sixties which further eroded its cohesion, particularly on political matters. There was the growing problem of integrating military leaders in what had once been the preserve of civilian politicians. It would be 1968 before Houphouët-Boigny was ready to welcome "a new generation of leaders" to the OCAM summit. Previously the fiction was maintained that the military regimes were there on a temporary basis only.

Again, the inclusion of Zaire, a former Belgian territory, had almost destroyed the organisation at its inception; there, too, military intervention and the arrival in power of Joseph Mobutu, in 1965, created additional problems, despite the efforts of the Francophone leaders to accommodate his forthright, if not always predictable, demands. His differences with some of his former Belgian and French neighbours, notably Ruanda and Congo-Brazzaville, tested even the ability of such skilled mediators as Houphouët-Boigny and Senghor.

There was the problem, too, of preserving the cohesion of the "French club" while accommodating certain other states whose presence was thought desirable either for reasons of French policy, or because

of the local or regional circumstances. While the organisation was open in theory to all independent African states, the Kenyan Vice-President was dissuaded from attending the OCAM summit in Madagascar, in 1966, as an observer. <sup>60/</sup> Tanzania, however, sent an observer to the Niamey summit in January 1968, and a year later it was announced that Mauritius, despite its membership of the Commonwealth, would also be admitted to membership of OCAM. <sup>61/</sup> Already, however, the differences within OCAM threatened to become insurmountable, despite the new-found consensus after 1966 between the principal West African leaders.

If the French were not notably enthusiastic about *francophonie* it may be because economic problems in Africa itself were pushing African states in the direction of the former Metropole, despite their insistence on their political independence. The French, for their part, perceiving the importance of economic ties, were prepared to be a little more conciliatory over their political differences with their African partners. At the end of 1966 Mali moved to improve its relations with France with a possible view to re-entering the Franc Zone - an indication of her growing economic difficulties and the attractions of French support and a more stable and convertible currency.

These negotiations continued for over a year, with active support by the Senegalese and from President Senghor, who wanted closer economic ties between his country and his large neighbour. Meanwhile economic ties between France and another socialist state, Congo-Brazzaville, were "normalised" in September 1967 : aid was to be increased and debts to France re-scheduled after what the Congolese President described as "a catastrophic economic crisis." <sup>62/</sup>

In October 1967 there was Toure's speech to the eighth congress of his party, looking forward, with what turned out to be unwarranted optimism, to renewed collaboration with the Senegal River States and to "an honest and fruitful" cooperation with France. Tunisia and Morocco were likewise seeking improved relations with France, disrupted in the first case by the nationalisation of European settler lands in May 1964, and in the second by the aftermath of the Ben Barka assassination.

Discussion of *francophonie* continued in a rather desultory fashion until the OCAM summit of January 1968, when President Diiori announced a forthcoming meeting of Education Ministers from French-speaking countries - to be held in Niamey before the end of the year. There would be invitations to the Maghreb countries, and to Switzerland, Belgium and Canada - for transmission to Quebec - as well as to the black African states.<sup>63/</sup> But a conference of African Ministers of Education, later that year in Libreville, Gabon, produced another diplomatic incident when the Education Minister of Quebec was invited to attend, but in the absence of a Canadian representative.<sup>64/</sup>

It was February 1969 when the international conference of Education Ministers finally convened in Niamey, attended by some thirty states, with Algeria, Mauritania, Guinea and Switzerland the only absentees. Showing greater tact and more diplomatic skill than either the French government or that of Gabon, Diiori invited both the Canadian and Quebec governments, thereby successfully de-fusing that issue and guaranteeing increased support for his own country from a grateful Canadian government.<sup>65/</sup>

There was much speculation about France's apparent support for a concept about which she had long entertained considerable doubts. The prospect of sharing the burden of African aid with other developed countries may have become increasingly attractive given France's own growing economic problems - which would force devaluation before the end of the year in circumstances that did little to enhance Francophone solidarity. Many African states were likewise concerned at the prospect of further falls in the French budget for cooperation and may have hoped to recuperate some of that aid from other, more prosperous donors.

It was our view throughout that dependence on the former colonial powers could never offer a satisfactory or lasting solution to the economic problems of the African states. Only cooperation, organised at first on a regional basis, could provide the stimulus to trade and investment that would produce more stable economies and provide some prospect of sustained economic growth. While foreign aid and assistance were welcome and, in the short term at least, necessary, the political ties and economic dependency that frequently accompanied them were not. If a re-united and more prosperous Nigeria could provide moral and economic support for her West African neighbours and encourage them to look beyond their former colonial ties and at the opportunities that only a regional economic community could provide, then that alone would provide ample justification for our prosecution of the war to maintain our national unity and our own independence.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

1. On May 24, 1966, General Ironsi announced decree No.34 which "re-named the Federal Military Government the National Government, redesignated the Regions as Groups of Provinces, and incorporated all civil servants, federal and regional, into a single public service."  
S.K.Panter-Brick, "From Military Coup to Civil War : January 1966 to May 1967", in S.K.Panter-Brick (ed.) Nigerian Politics and Military Rule : Prelude to the Civil War, p.23.
2. Le Monde, 21 March 1968.
3. Le Monde, 16 April 1968 Tanzania recognises 'Biafra'.  
23 April 1968 Zambia sympathetic to 'Biafra'.  
21 May 1968. Zambia officially recognises 'Biafra'.  
The question of diplomatic recognition of 'Biafra' is discussed at some length in J.J.Stremlau, The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War, 1968-1970, pp.122-141.
4. Le Monde, 23 April 1968.
5. Le Monde, 19 April 1968 (Niger); 24 April 1968 (Mali & Upper Volta).
6. Le Monde, 24 April 1968.
7. Ibid.
8. Le Monde, 11 May 1968.
9. Le Monde, 27 April 1968.
10. Le Monde, 7 May 1968.
11. Le Monde, 10 May 1968.
12. Le Monde, 16 May 1968.
13. Le Monde, 16 July 1968.
14. Ibid.
15. Le Monde, 21 Sept.1968.
16. Le Monde, 28 Sept.1968.
17. Le Monde, 30 June - 1 July 1968; wants a settlement negotiated by both sides, Le Monde, 1 Aug.1968. "The most bitter disappointment for the 'Biafrans' was the failure of Senegal to recognise. However "there is no indication that Dakar ever considered recognising 'Biafra'".
18. Le Monde, 10 Sept.1968.
19. Le Monde, 11 Sept.1968. The French press also quoted my reply : "A confederation - over my dead body." Le Monde, 11 Sept.1968.

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20. Le Monde, 17 Sept.1968; also comment on 18 Sept.1968 and 19 Sept.1968.
21. Le Monde, 21 Sept.1968.
22. Le Monde, 27 Sept.1968.
23. Le Monde, 30 January 1969. (OCAM and Nigeria); 22 February 1969; (Houphouët-Boigny received by General de Gaulle in Paris).
24. Le Monde, 12 March 1966.
25. Le Monde, 18 March 1966. It was reported that during Houphouët-Boigny's discussions with Foccart at Abidjan "Guinea was one of the main topics." Ibid.
26. Le Monde, 14 April 1966.
27. Le Monde, 19 March 1966 ('King of Sanwis' pardoned by Houphouët-Boigny)
28. Le Monde, 9 April 1966.
29. Le Monde, 12 April 1966.
30. Le Monde, 14 April 1966; the government in Mali was already looking to improve its relations with France. Le Monde, 16 June 1966.
31. There is an account of the incident in Le Monde, 21 July 1967.
32. Le Monde, 12 July 1967.
33. Le Monde, 29 September 1967.
34. Le Monde, 23 June 1966.
35. Le Monde, 28 October 1966.
36. Le Monde, 31 January 1967
37. Ibid.
38. Le Monde, 10 December 1966.
39. Le Monde, 19 January 1967; 17 February 1967; 22 September 1967; 20 December 1967;and again 17 April 1971.
40. Le Monde, 4 October 1967.
41. Le Monde, 28 October 1967, 8 November 1967.
42. Le Monde, 26 March 1968.



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43. Le Monde, 2 April 1968.
44. Communication from President Ould Daddah to Nigerian Head of State (Cable 885/PR. recd. Nov./Dec.1967).
45. 3 January 1968. Paris sceptical of Toure's intentions and latter's emissaries unable to make contact with the relevant French officials; 20 Jan.1968 (Guinea still seeking cooperation with France, Britain and other countries with whom it had broken diplomatic relations); 31 March 1968. (Houphouet-Boigny sees General de Gaulle but they do not apparently discuss relations with Guinea); 10 April 1968. (Senghor meets Houphouet-Boigny in Paris); 20 April 1968 (Senghor sees General de Gaulle).
46. The five states of the Entente together with the four states of the Senegal River Organisation would comprise nine of the fourteen members of the proposed Regional Group. Even without Guinea there was a majority of reliable Francophone states.
47. Le Monde, 24-25 November 1968; 27 November 1968.
48. Le Monde, 17 January 1969.
49. Le Monde, 4 February 1969.
50. Le Monde, 20 September 1973.
51. Le Monde, 1 December 1971.
52. W.J.Foltz, From French West Africa to the Mali Federation, chs.10,11.
53. The Association de solidarite francophone was set up early in 1967 with the participation of the Secrétaire d'Etat aux Affaires Étrangères, Jean de Broglie, a prominent member of Giscard d'Estaing's party - who had earlier been active in the negotiation of the Evian Agreements that terminated the war in Algeria. He was also vice-president of the parliamentary group Franco-Maroc 28 January 1967. Later that year Jean de Broglie wrote an article entitled 'Pour la Francophonie' wherein he complained that it was "incredible that France continues to give the impression that it dare not look the issue in the face." Le Monde, 5-6 November 1967. Later he was quoted as saying that "Francophonie was a struggle we had to wage, and not only on the cultural level." Le Monde, 5 December 1967.
54. Le Monde, 14 June 1966.
55. Le Monde, 6 March 1968.
56. Le Monde, 6 July 1966.
57. Le Monde, 6 March 1968.

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58. Le Monde, 4 February 1967.
59. Le Monde, 6 March 1968.
60. Le Monde, 24 June 1966.
61. Le Monde, 26-27 January 1969.
62. Le Monde, 21 September 1967.
63. Le Monde, 23 January 1968; 24 January 1968; 25 January 1968.
64. Le Monde, 7 February 1968; the conference was attended by two French ministers, MM. Peyrefitte and Yvon Bourges.
65. Le Monde, 20 February 1969, 21 February 1969.

CHAPTER 6APPROACHES TO REGIONAL INTEGRATION : THE NIGERIA/TOGOLESE  
PERSPECTIVE (1970-72]

This, and subsequent chapters, are concerned with developments from the end of the Nigerian civil war, in 1970, until the establishment of ECOWAS in 1975. In the intervening years the earlier obstacles that had impeded the movement towards closer economic cooperation within the region, were largely overcome by new forces, external and internal, working this time mainly in the direction of greater unity. The result was not one but two separate and overlapping organisations, one regional in name only where the other was regional in character and composition. They shared similar economic objectives but employed very different approaches - at least in the short term.

The West African Economic Community (CEAO) was conceived in May of 1970 in Bamako, Mali, to replace the defunct and long ineffective Francophone Customs Union (UDEAO). The new community was formally constituted at Bamako, in June 1972, and became operational the following April, after a meeting in Abidjan, the Ivory Coast. Exclusively Francophone in composition, it comprised six of the seven members of the former UDEAO, while Benin (Dahomey) remained outside, together with two other Francophone states, Togo and Guinea, who had not subscribed to the old Customs Union. It was obviously an attempt to forestall our efforts to create a more comprehensive sub-regional economic community. Building on existing structures, and benefiting from a long experience of fiscal and other forms of economic cooperation, the CEAO aimed at achieving a high degree of integration within a relatively short period of time.

There was also our own Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), inaugurated in Lagos in May 1975, with the participation of all fifteen states of the region, French, English and Portuguese speaking. ECOWAS was thus heir to the earlier regional movements of the 'sixties and successor to the rich pan-African tradition. It was clear from the start, however, that integration on such a scale would be a complex, difficult and necessarily protracted task, but also a rewarding and, in our view, essential one. Similar in some respects to a common market, ECOWAS also incorporated elements of a customs union.

We, too, had assimilated a body of valuable experience, including the lessons of the Regional Group and of other and earlier proposals by the ECA for regional development and integration. It seemed to us advisable, this time, to focus initially on a manageable range of issues, and to secure preliminary agreement by member states to a certain number of tangible objectives. These should not encroach too far on national sovereignty, or impose a new and substantial burden on any one government and they should be linked wherever possible to specific projects - beneficial for the region as a whole, with the shortest possible gestation time and, as far as possible, utilising available resources and existing manpower.

#### Pressures towards Regional Cooperation

#### Reconciliation

The more promising outlook for West African unity, in the 'seventies owed much to the end of the Nigerian war. While not alone responsible for the failure of previous attempts at integration, the war had certainly

contributed to the growing insecurity within the region, threatening the fragile consensus just beginning to emerge and weakening the sense of trust inseparable from most successful multilateral groupings.

However, our policy of reconciliation at home and abroad helped, I believe, quickly to dispel any remaining doubts about Nigeria's commitment to regional cooperation and to good relations with other African states.

The desired response was not always immediately forthcoming, even in West Africa, but the visible trend towards unity seemed to confirm my view that the differences within our region were neither as deep-rooted nor as intractable as they might sometimes appear. With the decline of ideology as a basis for inter-state alignment, the most tenacious and serious obstacle to regional cohesion was the linguistic barrier, complemented and reinforced, particularly in the case of the Francophone states, by multiple external linkages, political, military and economic. But even that problem began, in the 'seventies, to yield to new economic imperatives, arising from the deteriorating global situation, the North-South debate, and the greater need for African and for West African solidarity.

#### More Prominent Role for Nigeria

It was in this changing international context that Nigeria, which had long been associated with the movement for economic cooperation in Africa, assumed much greater significance in continental as well as in world affairs. This enhanced stature reflected not only to its size and population, but also its renewed sense of unity and purpose; it was a token of the international respect that Nigeria could now command with the end of the civil war and the resumption of oil exploration and extraction on a much

larger scale than before. Production of crude oil peaked just as the shortfall in world supplies and the activities of OPEC combined to push prices to unprecedented levels.

Our large and affluent domestic market soon attracted the attention of the major industrial powers, while neighbouring countries sought to share in the benefits of this expanding trade and to capture some part of the Nigerian market for their own agricultural and industrial produce. By 1973-4 Nigeria was not only a major source of a commodity in short supply throughout the western world, but was also prepared, in the interests of regional cooperation, to negotiate favourable terms for its sale to our West African partners.

#### Global Economic Crisis

Coinciding with our sudden prosperity and economic expansion was the global recession that followed the collapse of the Bretton Woods agreement and the energy crisis ushered in by the Middle East conflict of 1973. Nigeria was to a large extent insulated from the worst effects of the first recession of the 'seventies, which were otherwise felt throughout Africa and particularly by the non oil-producing countries - which were the great majority. In several West African states the situation was even more critical on account of the severe and prolonged drought which, since 1968, had affected the Sahel zone and which would persist, in some cases, until 1975.

African and West African governments could now see more clearly than before the advantages of cooperation in a world where others were preoccupied with their own survival and where the least developed countries had not only to pay more for their oil and imported goods, but were unable by conventional means, including the production and sale of raw commodities, to generate sufficient foreign exchange to finance these essential purchases.

While the economic recession tended, therefore, to set Nigeria and other African oil-producing countries apart from their neighbours and from the rest of the Third World, we were determined to show, both by our words and by our actions, that Nigeria would continue to identify with the needs and the interests of the under-developed states and, in particular, with those of our less fortunate West African neighbours. Nor was this simple philanthropy on our part.

#### Nigeria's Identification with West African needs and interests

Nigeria was a populous state, still under-developed in many respects, with inadequate infrastructure, a population still largely illiterate and a per capita income that was low even by some African standards. Our own previous experience and that of others suggested that we could not expect our present good fortune to continue indefinitely. Whether we liked it or not our future was bound up with that of our African neighbours. We had a vigorous and expanding industry which was already looking for new markets, and a long history of successful trade which was by no means confined even to West Africa. But trade and commerce were highly vulnerable to domestic pressures, political and economic, in other African states.

After the civil war the Federal Military Government tried by various means to promote economic, social and cultural inter-change across existing frontiers and thus, hopefully, convince our prospective partners of the advantage of stable and continuing cooperation within a regional framework. We revised our foreign policy to ensure that high priority would in future be awarded to African and West African relations. We entered into numerous bi-lateral arrangements with our neighbours in such areas as transport, communications and energy, and covering investment as well as trade.

A proportion of our oil revenues was set aside for relief in the drought-affected states of the Sahel and, by 1975, we were providing crude oil, on favourable terms, to many of the coastal states. We also let it be known that, in future, support on this scale would be forthcoming on a multi-lateral rather than a bi-lateral basis. By which means we were able to create a vocal and effective regional lobby on behalf of ECOWAS - one that included Francophone governments, notwithstanding the opposition of France and of prominent Francophone leaders.

#### Change in French Leadership and in Franco-African Relations

We were assisted indirectly, by the changes of government in France at this time. The resignation of President de Gaulle, in 1969, and his death shortly afterwards, generated widespread demands among African states for revision of the cooperation agreements - military, economic and technical - that they had signed with France just after independence. And in almost every case the pressure was in the direction of greater political and economic independence, notwithstanding the international recession.



After an initial hesitation, the new French administration, under President Pompidou, responded in a suitably pragmatic and conciliatory way, emphasising the economic rather than the political benefits of continued association with France and with the EEC. Here, however, the entry of Britain into the Common Market in January 1973, just as the Francophone states were again preparing to re-negotiate their arrangements with the EEC - in what was referred to as Yaounde III - provided new allies and much needed support and encouragement for the Francophone countries in their quests for independence and economic advantage - not least from Nigeria and other former British colonies.

Nigeria's readiness, at the end of 1973, to join in the complex negotiations in Brussels and act as spokesman for the African, Caribbean and Pacific states, now collectively negotiating their association with the EEC, and the favourable outcome of the discussions, again demonstrated the practical value of African and Third World solidarity. It also strengthened our case for cooperation across existing boundaries and in the context of regional groupings like the proposed ECOWAS.

The new ascendancy of economic issues and France's belated recognition, in 1973, of the need for regional structures in Francophone Africa where such issues could more regularly and more appropriately be discussed, made it difficult for others to continue to refuse cooperation across former colonial boundaries and to dispute the necessity for groupings like ECOWAS. Moreover, economic issues usually lent themselves more readily to negotiation and compromise than those with a political or military bias. And in the deteriorating economic climate there was also

the prospect that, sooner or later, the greater economic potential of ECOWAS would overcome the initial anxiety of CEAO members about their incorporation in the wider body.

#### Change in West African Leadership

The changes of leadership in West Africa, which reflected the growing political role of the military, although more abrupt than those in France and occasionally a threat to political stability, likewise made an independent and, on the whole, an important contribution to regional unity. Where previous attempts at integration were unable to surmount the ideological quarrels, feuds and personal rivalries so long associated with members of the African political class, the advent of a new generation of military leaders, shortly after independence, served often to focus attention on economic issues, on the value of inter-state cooperation, and on the region as the appropriate arena for such cooperation.

Which is not to say that all military leaders felt or acted alike, or that national differences and priorities were entirely eliminated in the interests of regional harmony and effective collaboration. The willingness of military leaders to cooperate would seem to depend on their age, experience and background, on the pattern of civil-military relations in each state, and on the nature of the problems that they inherited from their civilian predecessors.

Usually, however, military leaders were less constrained by traditional enmities based on party, creed and personality; less vulnerable to domestic pressures and local power configurations; able, in many cases,

to take a somewhat broader and longer-term view of their country's economic and administrative requirements, and more likely, therefore, to respond to advice of economists and other specialists who shared their concern with the development of the continent, and their preference for policies and structures that would produce beneficial and lasting results for all.

#### Bridging the Remaining Divisions in West Africa

A final, but also vital, ingredient in the successful creation of regional groupings in West Africa, and of ECOWAS in particular, was the disappearance, in the 'seventies, of some of the more serious divisions that had previously made economic cooperation difficult if not impossible. For historical, political and geographic reasons, these differences had been most pronounced among the Francophone states. Ironically, it was the emergence of Nigeria, after the civil war, as the major political and economic force within the region which I believe finally precipitated the reconciliation between Senegal and the Ivory Coast, with the meeting of their respective leaders in December 1971 - ending decades of intense rivalry.

But it was this reconciliation that, in turn, made possible the emergence of a new Francophone grouping, the West African Economic Community (CEAO) : evidence not only of Nigeria's new strength and importance within the region, but also of the waning appeal of many of the earlier Francophone organisations, whose rationale had been political rather than economic. Before long, however, our policy of reconciliation had succeeded in bridging even this new barrier to regional cooperation.

I was also able to use my good offices and friendship with Sékou Touré to effect a reconciliation between Guinea and Ghana, after the death in 1972 of Kwame Nkrumah. And, in my capacity as Chairman of the OAU during 1973-4, I was required to mediate in a number of disputes including that between Guinea and Senegal. Essentially these were collective efforts undertaken on behalf of the OAU by various African leaders.

Our main success was, perhaps, to secure the presence in Brussels of a representative of Guinea in October 1973, alongside the other African, Caribbean and Pacific nations, during the negotiations of the terms of their association with the EEC.<sup>1/</sup> This marked the beginning of the end of Guinea's isolation within Francophone Africa. Nine months later a French minister visited Conakry and Guinea, and France opened discussions in Paris that would lead to rapprochement in 1978.<sup>2/</sup>

#### The Theme is Reconciliation

The final drive towards economic cooperation in West Africa began with the OAU summit in Addis Ababa, in 1970, and our cordial invitation to former opponents to accept the hand of friendship and help usher in a decade of reconciliation and unity. The movement received a further stimulus at the 1972 OAU summit in Rabat, convened under the auspices of 'reconciliation' and 'liberation', when disputes affecting various African states were resolved so that the process of de-colonisation might be brought to a speedy and successful conclusion.

Later, as chairman of the OAU in 1973-4, I made a point of pursuing an active diplomatic role outside Nigeria, seeking to de-fuse those issues that would otherwise compromise African unity and weaken our international bargaining position. Our conduct of the negotiations with the EEC - on behalf of and in conjunction with the forty-six ACP countries - was itself, I think, a major achievement on the part of those directly involved, with substantial benefits for all concerned; and it confirmed Nigeria's role as an international spokesman for African and Third World interests. Even the French were forced to acknowledge the benefits that the Francophone states had derived from our mediation.

The meeting in May 1975, in Lagos, where representatives of all fifteen West African states, including Guinea-Bissau, finally approved the establishment of ECOWAS, carried reconciliation in the region to what seemed a logical conclusion. Thus, when the need for unity within Africa was particularly pressing, given the global recession, the collapse of Portuguese resistance, and the sudden isolation of the white regimes of Southern Africa, and at the very time that the East African Community was unfortunately succumbing to political, ideological, and economic rivalries, the West African leaders set an example that would hopefully serve as a future point of reference for other states in other regions.

#### Reconciliation Begins

The interval between the Monrovia meeting of May 1968 and the revival of the movement towards West African economic cooperation, in 1972, was usefully employed in discussions within the region, at various levels of government, advancing the arguments for and trying to counter those

against the proposed grouping. In this way sufficient interest was generated to enable me and the Federal Military Government of Nigeria, in conjunction with General Eyadema of Togo, and his government, to undertake a new regional initiative.

January 1970 saw the end of the civil war in Nigeria, and the start of an unprecedented era of peace and reconciliation. Within Nigeria, the Federal Military Government embarked on reconstruction and development in all twelve of our states, in the conviction that unity was best served by a policy of generosity to our former opponents and an equitable distribution of the country's new-found wealth and resources.

Outside Nigeria it was my contention that regional cooperation provided the only secure basis for our own continuing unity and for the independence and development of our African neighbours. Hence the Nigerian decision, taken at the OAU summit in Addis Ababa, in 1970, to extend reconciliation to those countries that had recognised and supported the rebellion and had thus incurred the displeasure of the Federal Military Government - and a break in diplomatic relations.

I was particularly pleased with this unilateral decision taken in Addis Ababa against the advice of all my officials. The enthusiastic reception accorded the speech was such as to convince even the most critical that the initiative had been timely and correct. Our former opponents themselves were taken unawares by the move. Reconciliation was extended in this way not only to the Ivory Coast, with whom relations had been severed in 1968, but to other West African states whose attitude to Nigeria during the civil war had been hostile in all but name.

The new decade thus began in a happier and more cooperative mood as our efforts and energy were directed towards the goal of regional cooperation and multilateral organisation. The tenth anniversary of Nigerian Independence, also in 1970, afforded us a unique opportunity to canvass support for our ideas before a distinguished audience representing most African and West African governments - in itself a tribute to Nigeria's new role in African and international affairs. We took advantage of the occasion to express our gratitude to members of the OAU for their loyal support throughout the civil war, while reminding our West African neighbours that security and stability were essential for development and could best be achieved within a framework of regional cooperation.

In the past we had tried to achieve this cooperation mainly by various bi-lateral agreements and, with the conclusion of the civil war and our country's rapid economic recovery and growth, there were numerous requests from other African states for unique trading privileges and diplomatic facilities. It seemed to us, in Nigeria, that while bi-lateral relationships were to be encouraged in the absence of any alternative form of cooperation, multi-lateral arrangements were preferable, particularly at the regional level where the OAU and ECA were anxious to encourage closer integration.

Apart from the enhanced economic opportunities for all, there was a desire on our part to avoid unnecessary duplication and minimise the risk of new conflicts and rivalries emerging within the region. Until 1972, therefore, and beyond, every opportunity was taken, in the context of normal diplomatic activity, to emphasise our determination to persist with the idea of a regional grouping and to encourage others to coordinate their activities towards this end. Almost every communique included some

reference to our belief that "only a regional approach to the question of an African Common Market is realistic".

Our activities in this direction after the civil war, were well summarised in a lecture by the Commissioner of External Affairs, Dr. Okoi Arikpo, to the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs:

Within the few years, Nigeria had concluded trade agreements with seven neighbouring countries in the West African sub-region, air services agreements with five, and economic cooperation agreements with another five. We have also established telecommunication links with five OAU member countries in the sub-region, and joint customs posts with three others.

Or again,

Cash grants of over four million naira have been made available to eight member countries of the OAU, in addition to over a million naira worth of grain and other foodstuffs donated to the Republic of Niger. Nigeria continues to make the facilities at her ports and airfields available to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation free of charge for the purpose of transporting relief material to the neighbouring countries. 3/

In our first exploratory discussions with other West African leaders and interested parties the two studies commissioned by the Monrovia conference, in 1968, provided a useful point of reference and later furnished the basis for more serious negotiation. They comprised the joint study by Liberia and Senegal, concerning the nature, form and content of the proposed customs union, and the document prepared by Nigeria and Guinea, dealing with other aspects of economic cooperation and the relative priority to be accorded them. Where the first document



also helped inspire the rival CEAO, it was the second that had favourably impressed the Togolese leadership, and created the basis for our collaboration after the civil war. Thus our joint proposals with Togo, prepared in 1972, owed much to the earlier efforts of the Nigeria-Guinea team.

#### Nigeria and Togo as the Nucleus of a West African Economic Community

Togo, whose interest in trade with Nigeria, and between Nigeria and Ghana has already been mentioned, had for some time been assisting in our efforts to promote regional cooperation. The friendly relations between our two states, which began at independence under civilian leadership, had continued under their military successors. Bi-lateral agreements signed by Nigeria with Togo, in 1964 and 1966, contained provisions not unlike those later included in the ECOWAS protocols.

Thus the 1964 agreement permitted citizens of either country to enter the other without a visa. The trade agreement of 1966, similar to many concluded in West Africa at about the same time, extended "most favoured nation treatment" on a reciprocal basis which did not, however, affect the privileges that either partner enjoyed as a result of a separate agreement with a third party, or which derived from its membership in another sub-regional grouping. There was also the right of free transit for commercial goods originating in one of the other states.

As a former trusteeship territory, like the Cameroon, Togo had never been a member of the French West African Federation or, indeed,

of the 1959 Francophone Customs Union (UDAO), reorganised in 1966 as the UDEAO. Invited nevertheless to join the CEA0, after the dissolution of the customs union in 1970, Togo agreed only to send an observer and subsequently declined membership in the new body. This was, to some extent, a continuation of the policy that had kept Togo out of the Entente until the removal of Nkrumah in 1966. In the meantime, however, Nigeria had replaced Ghana as the chief prospective partner.

Even in agreeing to host the OCAM summit in Lome, in April 1972, Eyadema had proclaimed his government's intention to avoid alliances that might impair the establishment of useful, bi-lateral relations with non-OCAM countries such as Nigeria and Ghana. And, in an unprecedented gesture of solidarity with Nigeria, and illustrating th strong belief in a West African regional grouping, Eyadema declined the offer of the presidency of OCAM - for which, admittedly, there were at the time few contenders. 4/

The Togolese President also engineered an astute diplomatic coup to coincide with the OCAM summit in his capital. As it was also the twelfth anniversary of his country's independence he invited both myself and General Ignatius Acheampong, who had recently taken power in Ghana, to visit Lome and meet the Francophone leaders. I could then take the question of reconciliation a stage further by appealing for a combined effort, once and for all, to bridge the old colonial divisions within the region and mend our previous differences. Appropriately, Eyadema's speech of welcome emphasised the need for cooperation to achieve economic independence and overcome what economists described as the under-development of the region; he also underlined my own government's efforts over the years in that direction. 5/

The discussions in Lome were exploratory but did mark the beginning of a new and more intensive phase in the diplomatic campaign to win support for our regional proposals. Where Eyadema took the opportunity for an exchange of views with the new Ghanaian Head of State, I tried to convince the Francophone leaders not only of our genuine wish to reconciliation but also of our earnest desire for a regional community that would transcend existing barriers to trade and investment and would encompass a wide range of social and economic functions. They were assured of Nigeria's cooperation and assistance in any enterprise that would increase African independence, improve the terms of our international trade, and promote the welfare of everyone within the region.

From my discussions with Hamani Diori and others, in Lome, it was clear that there was considerable support for our project among most of the Francophone leaders, while only a few were openly hostile and close to France in that respect. My colleague, General Eyadema, was well placed to appreciate the strength and character of French opposition - amply confirmed, in any case, by our own experience to date. The haste with which the CEAO was improvised, after 1970, betrayed the extent of French concern about Nigerian influence and was evidence of their determination to secure their own position and that of their closest allies in the region. They had even appropriated, in French translation, the title we had hitherto used to designate our proposed community - The West African Economic Community (CEAO).

It was Eyadema's view that a *fait accompli* was the best and perhaps only means of neutralising such opposition, overcoming the

resistance of some and the reticence of others. He urged that our two countries should, then and there, and without further ado, conclude a formal treaty establishing the West African Economic Community. He could then announce this to his Francophone colleagues before their departure from the Togolese capital. The proposal reflected the strength of Eyadema's commitment to regional cooperation, his obvious enthusiasm for the project in hand and his impatience to see it realised. But it may also have derived from his analysis of current trends within *francophonie* as they affected the balance of forces in West Africa and the prospects for regional integration.

There was a strong case, which I readily accepted, for a prompt and decisive initiative on the part of Togo and Nigeria and in favour of our own regional proposal. Franco-African relations were still in some disarray following the resignation of General de Gaulle in 1969, while the leading Francophone states, the Ivory Coast and Senegal, who were opposed to our scheme, had not yet fully recovered from the sudden and unexpected collapse of "Biafra" in early 1970 (January 12) - and had been embarrassed, more recently, by the strength of African opposition to 'dialogue' with the South African regime. While Senghor had been careful not to align himself fully with the Ivory Coast on either issue, both states lost influence as a result - not least among their former West African 'clients'.

Despite their formal reconciliation in December 1971, Senegal and the Ivory Coast again encountered opposition within the region to the proposed CEAO - from Francophone states anxious to reassert their independence of Paris, Abidjan and Dakar, and well aware of the benefits to be derived from closer cooperation with Nigeria. Meanwhile, Britain's proposed entry into the EEC, following her adherence to the Community Treaty

in January 1972, completed the discomfiture of the two Francophone leaders who had linked their new regional initiative with the re-negotiation of the existing convention between the former French states and the EEC. What began as 'Yaounde III' soon gave way, in 1973, to the Brussels negotiations and finally, in 1975, to the new convention concluded at Lome between the EEC and the African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) states.

Within West Africa the Sahel states, and Niger in particular, were actively campaigning for a broader community that would include the Anglophone states, while Benin (Dahomey) was increasingly reticent about the CEAO and Togo had rejected all but observer status. It must have seemed to Eyadema that to delay further the creation of our regional community would only provide our opponents with the time they badly needed to recover their former influence, regroup their supporters and resume their offensive against Nigeria. It would discourage our own Francophone allies and increase the likelihood of the CEAO becoming operational in the near future.

Such arguments were not to be dismissed lightly. On reflection, however, I concluded that an initiative along the lines suggested by Eyadema was, to say the least, premature. Precipitate action of this kind - in the absence of further consultations with other leaders about the nature, organisation and purposes of the new community - would amount to an ultimatum. It could only result in the complete and definitive rejection of our proposals by all other governments in the region. It would antagonise the English-speaking countries, which had shown considerable interest in, and enthusiasm for the project, and must provoke an adverse reaction from the French-speaking states. Francophone unity would be quickly

re-constituted without Togo; the differences that had delayed the establishment of the CEAO would be set aside for the present; and our hopes for a genuine regional community in West Africa would again be frustrated - while interest would not easily or quickly be revived.

While Nigeria greatly valued Togo's collaboration and saw our two countries as the nucleus of a future West African community, it was not desirable to give the impression that the community would operate at two levels, or that Nigeria would entertain privileged ties with one state at the expense of others. Moreover, it would be rash, and counter-productive, to launch a regional grouping with only two countries which, however important in terms of their combined population, revenue and resources, were scarcely representative of the region as a whole. With so many and such varied states only a consensual approach offered any prospect of an early and successful economic union.

While Nigeria could not agree to form a multi-lateral organisation with Togo as our only initial partner, we did agree instead that our two countries, with their long history of cooperation, should constitute the nucleus, or embryo, of the future economic community - and that this decision might form the basis of our joint communiqué. President Eyadema, himself, was realistic and gracious enough to concede the wisdom of this approach. Although couched in diplomatic language no one, least of all the other West African leaders, could mistake the significance of that communiqué and the message contained therein.

It constituted a solemn, public and binding commitment, by our two states, to the early creation of a regional economic community. In

that sense the decision we had taken was irrevocable : there could be no turning back on our part after Lome whatever the final response to our initiative. But no one state, government or leader could complain that they were being asked to join an organisation created by fiat, whose structures, functions, procedures and personnel had been determined in advance. It was not a *fait accompli*, still less an ultimatum : but an invitation to our West African colleagues to join and assist us in the crucial deliberations that alone would determine the future shape of the community and the prosperity of our region.

Some press reports gave a misleading account of our conclusions in Lome, implying not only that the new community was well and truly launched, but also that our two governments were in the process of defining its structures and *modus operandi*. However, on this point the terms of the communique are quite explicit as the relevant paragraph (4) of the communique clearly showed:

The two Heads of State emphasised the need to promote cooperation among African countries at all levels - bilateral, *regional*, and multilateral - as a positive means for achieving African Unity. To this end, they agreed to establish an economic community made up of their two countries as a nucleus of a West African Economic Community. They directed that officials of their two countries should meet at Lagos in June, 1972 to consider ways and means of establishing the Togo/Nigerian Economic Community and submit recommendations to the governments of the two countries for study. 6/

The June 1972 meeting of the officials of the two countries took place as proposed in Lagos from 29 June-2 July and a definite step was then taken to involve all the countries of the West African sub-region at the earliest possible opportunity - with Togo and Nigeria giving the lead. 7/

Meanwhile, in Lome, bi-lateral treaties of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance were signed on behalf of Nigeria and Togo, and we agreed to consider ways of improving our commercial relations within the framework of the 1966 Treaty. But bi-lateral relations, however valuable, were no longer seen as an end in themselves. Instead they were offered as further evidence of our commitment to economic cooperation within the region as a whole and across the old linguistic and colonial frontiers.

They did not signify the creation of a distinct sub-regional grouping, like the Entente or the proposed Mano River Union, that would persist as a separate body within the wider regional community. Nor were they intended as the basis of a hypothetical Benin Union, grouping Nigeria and its western neighbours, Togo and Benin (Dahomey) and possibly even Ghana, although such a union was seen, in 1972, in Nigeria and elsewhere, as one possible response to the creation of a CEAO excluding the Anglophone states. The one and only aim of our talks in Lome was the creation, at the earliest possible opportunity, of a single, comprehensive regional community, whose economic functions would initially complement but would later incorporate or supersede all other forms of sub-regional organisation. It would eventually become one, and perhaps the most important regional component in the African Common Market to which the OAU and the ECA were both committed. Finally, Eyadema and myself devised a new name for our proposed community - the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS or, in French, CEDEAO.



ECOWAS and Nigeria : "The Great Debate"

Our West African policies encountered almost no opposition from public opinion inside Nigeria, where reactions from interested groups and from the public generally were mostly favourable - although there was some dissent in a few academic circles. If there was so little disagreement it was not that our style of government was either arbitrary or autocratic. On the contrary, our deliberations were widely publicised and our decisions were not infrequently attacked in national and local newspapers, which enjoyed a large circulation and a considerable degree of editorial freedom. Rather, the technical nature of the issues involved, and the complexity and high level of negotiations, all tended to confine the discussion for the most part to specialists, administrators, those responsible for government and others with a particular and direct interest in the final outcome.

Government in Nigeria was military and decision-making was, therefore centralised - in the Federal Executive Council and the Supreme Military Council. Much also depended, here as in other countries, on the Head of State. But the Nigerian administration was federal and our institutions, at each level of government, enjoyed as much discretion as was consonant with the effective conduct of public affairs. Important decisions were the product of considerable, sometimes protracted discussion, and the Federal Military Government actively encouraged and even canvassed the presentation of a wide range of viewpoints.

Thus during the latter part of the civil war, as the outline and objectives of the Second National Development Plan (1970-74) were finalised, we sought the opinions of various departments and ministries concerning not only the shape of the plan, and its various priorities and commitments, but also about the implications for our own future development of the proposed West African Common Market. The merits of the proposal were recognised everywhere within government and the administration, particularly the prospect of greater diversification and increased specialisation within the region, and substantial economies of scale within a much larger market; also the less tangible but very real benefits of a more secure and stable environment. Any reservations concerned not so much the community itself, but future regional programmes and their possible impact on Nigeria. The long-term advantages were conceded, despite some reservations, about their precise nature and extent; what aroused most debate was a consideration of possible and immediate costs rather than of subsequent benefits. <sup>8/</sup>

There was understandable anxiety lest Nigeria should find herself bound, at some future date, by agreements that would limit her control of her own resources, particularly access to and the marketing of her oil. It was clear already, however, that the structure of the proposed community would not permit community decisions affecting the vital national interests of any one member without that country's prior consent. Our position in relation to Nigerian oil would be similar to that of Britain and North Sea oil after she joined the EEC. Others were doubtful of the prospect of greatly increased trade within the region,

given the very limited market in West Africa for minerals and raw materials, other than oil, and the fact that our economies were competitive rather than complementary. Moreover, Europe, America and Japan were likely to remain Nigeria's major markets for the foreseeable future. But it was precisely in order to begin to reduce our dependency on existing markets, and diversifying our economy, that we, and others, had proposed and supported regional cooperation in the first place.

There was also discussion about the nature and extent of the proposed benefits that Nigerian industries would derive from participation in a regional community or common market. While aware of the limitations of more traditional 'import substitution' policies, some favoured continued expansion of the domestic market rather than the quest for new markets elsewhere in the region. There was a preference, too, for developing certain forms of industry, particularly iron and steel and petro-chemicals, and a fear that community policy in those areas might one day retard our own industrial development. Far from excluding or delaying such development, however, a regional community would not only provide the necessary and obvious market for such expansion and diversification, but would also guarantee a secure and convenient source of many of the raw materials that would then be required, particularly iron ore for the steel industry.

Others, again, were reluctant to enter any community with extensive Francophone participation, perhaps fearing some repetition of French action in favour of secession in 1968. But a major argument in favour of the community was that it would help stabilise relations within the region, reducing or eliminating external intervention, and guaranteeing the territorial integrity and independence of each member-state.

Where elsewhere small industries and manufacturers have tended to be opposed to programmes of regional integration that was certainly not the case in Nigeria. Our own manufacturers seemed to welcome the challenge of wider competition and the opportunities that the proposed community offered them. Thus Chief Henry Fajemirokun, the then Chairman of the Nigerian Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, was an enthusiastic supporter of the government's proposals from the start and remained so until his death. It had long been our government's policy to encourage Nigerian and African enterprise and industry - not only by providing a larger regional market and reducing and eventually eliminating existing discriminatory measures discouraging trade within the region, but also by pursuing policies aimed at 'indigenisation'.

In 1972 the Federal Military Government by means of the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree, had restricted foreign and overseas investment to those sectors where Nigerian technology and skills were not yet adequate or where sufficient capital investment was not otherwise available. These and earlier measures had considerably strengthened Nigeria's industrial base as overseas investors moved out of retailing and small scale commerce and manufacturing and into larger scale and more capital intensive industry. Manufacturers elsewhere in the region were not slow to see the possible benefits to be derived from West African cooperation and, in November 1972, at a meeting in Abidjan, the Ivory Coast, a Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture was formally constituted. Its principal tasks included a campaign to convince other governments, and industry elsewhere in the region, of the benefits to be derived from ECOWAS. They would at the same time try

to ensure that the leaders of the future community were themselves aware of the needs and requirements of African entrepreneurs and would give some preference to goods originating within the member-states.

Once the Federal Military Government had committed itself to ECOWAS the nature and focus of discussion shifted away from the policy and towards its implementation. Here again our relatively advanced institutional development coupled with our size, and complexity, created difficulties that other governments in the region were probably spared. There may have been, and may still be, some in Nigeria who believe that the country can be administered efficiently like a large army, by command alone, perhaps tempered by a certain flamboyance of personality and an indiscriminate use of appointment and promotion procedures, but such methods were unlikely, in the short or the long term, to bring about important, beneficial and lasting changes.

It was our view that sound administration pre-supposed a willingness to delegate important tasks to competent officials who were nevertheless accountable to the government of the day and thereby to the country as a whole. Like other modern governments we were dependent, to that extent, on the administration for advice and the implementation of our decisions. We were also vulnerable to the kind of disputes that inevitably arise wherever there is administrative specialisation and division of labour.

However, the Federal Military Government was determined from the outset that such disputes should not be allowed to persist and develop,

let alone reach the stage where government itself was affected, or where policy-making had to be suspended pending an administrative 'cease-fire' - as had happened all too often under the First Republic. Our objective was to achieve de-centralisation of administration and delegation of functions without at the same time impairing the principles of effective and responsible government.

It was in this spirit that we approached the conflict that soon enveloped much of the federal administration in Nigeria once it was clear that the creation of ECOWAS was now only a matter of time. It was a question of designating the ministry that was to have overall responsibility within Nigeria for the new project. From previous experience we knew that such disputes, affecting the tasks and engaging the loyalties of different ministries and officials, would quickly escalate unless resolved at once and with a minimum of coercion. It would not only delay implementation of our plans, here and in other sectors, but could in the end prove much more damaging to ECOWAS than any amount of external opposition to the scheme.

Moreover, a compromise solution, splitting the responsibility for ECOWAS either between or among various ministries, while initially attractive, would only lead to further friction and perhaps foster endemic rivalry within the civil service establishment. Such unrestrained bureaucratic competition would, sooner or later, undermine the authority of the Federal Military Government and deprive ECOWAS of the very substantial contribution that Nigerian officials could otherwise be expected to make. The Nigerian civil service was easily the largest in West (or black) Africa and ECOWAS would undoubtedly be heavily dependent, at the start, on the skills and experience of our bureaucrats.

Throughout 1972 and until the creation of ECOWAS there was constant communication and frequent contact between myself and General Eyadema, and between Togolese and Nigerian officials. In the early stages, the Commissioner for External Affairs, Dr. Okoi Arikpo, was the leader of the Nigerian delegation at all joint meetings of officials of the two countries. Our team also included representatives of the relevant ministries - Economic Development, Finance, Trade, Industries, Agriculture, and of course, External Affairs. The two most important ministries in this connection were Economic Development and Reconstruction and External Affairs and, from the outset, both disputed the control of the inter-ministerial committee representing Nigeria in the joint talks.

External Affairs maintained that all matters affecting other countries were their particular responsibility. Moreover, as they were already represented in each of the states within the region, they could more effectively monitor developments as and when they occurred. The Ministry of Economic Development argued instead that all issues with an economic content, whether domestic or foreign, should be their sole responsibility. They considered ECOWAS primarily as an economic venture and one directly affecting Nigeria's own future economic development. Any decisions by Nigeria regarding the regional community should therefore, it was said, reflect our domestic situation and our present economic priorities.

It was clear that this issue would have to be resolved before we, in Nigeria, could enter the next phase in the campaign for ECOWAS. Hitherto the Commissioner for External Affairs and his Ministry had been responsible for the intense diplomatic effort that characterised the

period 1970-72 and which provided a secure foundation for our subsequent activities in the region. But as we moved, after 1972, from purely diplomatic contacts to decide more detailed preparations, it became necessary to consider which ministry in Nigeria should be entrusted with the new enterprise. This then gave rise to what observers described at the time as "the great debate".

Traditionally, any question touching on Nigeria's relationship with another country had been the constitutional responsibility of the Ministry of External Affairs, irrespective of the subject matter. In this way the Ministry had consolidated its position after independence and had even developed a certain expertise in areas outside the normal run of diplomatic activity. Experts from other departments were usually attached to, or posted to the Ministry to advise the diplomats on more technical questions. This was the precedent that we followed in the case of ECOWAS until after 1972.

Meanwhile other ministries and departments had emerged in the 'seventies with interests extending far beyond Nigeria and with an expertise and competence that, in certain areas, rivalled or exceeded that of External Affairs. The Ministries of Trade and Industries and, even more, the Ministry of Economic Development, began claiming the right to speak and act on behalf of Nigeria in matters pertaining to ECOWAS. Given the importance that the Federal Military Government attached to regional cooperation, the resources that had been allocated, and the prestige and influence attendant on success in this area, ministries naturally



perceived ECOWAS to be a major growth area and at a time of considerable administrative expansion. And each was soon able to marshal cogent and persuasive arguments in defence of its position.

The Ministry of External Affairs claimed constitutional right and historical precedent; they maintained that they had the necessary competence in the areas to be covered by ECOWAS, and warned against allowing other ministries to make pronouncements outside Nigeria on matters of government policy. During the first Republic there had been a serious row between the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Information concerning responsibility for the release of government statements. The matter was temporarily resolved by a compromise whereby External Affairs were entrusted with the dissemination of information outside Nigeria while Information would be responsible for publicity within Nigeria : their releases would then provide the material for all statements by the Ministry of External Affairs.

Where the Ministry of External Affairs had considerable experience, the other ministries cited their greater expertise in areas that would be central to ECOWAS. Where the External Affairs had an extensive network of diplomatic contacts, the other ministries claimed to be able to represent effectively the views of the government in the other West African states. They asked that External Affairs be made to relay their views and policies instead of trying to impose its own. The issue was finally resolved in favour of the Ministry of Economic Development, responsible for the country's Second National Development

Plan, 1970-74, and preparing already for the Third Plan, 1975-80, which not only envisaged an expanded role for state and private investment within Nigeria, but also provided for greater participation by Nigeria in the economic welfare of the whole region.

The intimate relationship between domestic and regional development seemed to militate in favour of a single ministry with responsibility for both areas. As the Ministry of External Affairs could hardly be expected to undertake economic development within Nigeria, it was the conclusion of the Federal Executive Council that responsibility for ECOWAS should in future be entrusted to the Ministry for Economic Development. External Affairs grudgingly accepted this decision, after it was pointed out that most major decisions on ECOWAS, as it affected Nigeria, would be taken within the Federal Executive Council - and that any ministry, department or official could make their views known there without risk of recrimination or reprisal. Ours was an open style of government, based on a consensual approach, where all were expected to contribute - and this would continue to be the case with ECOWAS in the future.

Earlier in the "great debate", the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Industries had wisely consented to transfer to the Ministry of Economic Development all matters pertaining to ECOWAS, conceding that theirs were but two of the many areas to be covered by a regional economic grouping. They appreciated that there was more to such a union than specific economic projects and that the political, economic, social and moral development of the region required a comprehensive outlook and total commitment from each and every department and official. It was therefore essential that responsibility be confined to a single

ministry which, in any case, would be under the constant supervision of the Head of Government who along with his Government had staked their reputation on the success of ECOWAS.

In our joint deliberations with Togo, therefore, and in all negotiations affecting ECOWAS after 1972, it was the Ministry of Economic Development and the new Commissioner, Dr. Adebayo Adedeji who had charge of our interministerial committee. Adedeji brought with him a new zeal and dynamism and a wealth of new ideas, determined as he was to succeed both as Commissioner of Economic Development and as leader of the Nigerian delegation at the joint Togo-Nigeria Ministerial Committee on ECOWAS. He was at once extremely popular with the Nigerian and Togolese delegations, and soon proved a capable leader.

Working at the same time on the completion of the Second National Development Plan and the preparation of the Third, he was already familiar with most of the issues involved and had ready access to the available economic and statistical data, which he could then make available to the government for appropriate action on any relevant topic, national or regional. With so many and such heavy responsibilities Dr. Adedeji worked himself hard and expected to find a similar sense of dedication in his civil servants, senior and junior. Whatever the achievements of the West African leaders, at the 'summit', the important role of our officials and advisors certainly deserves special mention.

In Lomé, where ECOWAS became the responsibility of the Presidential Office, decisions seemed to be made more quickly and more easily than in Lagos, where various departments and officials and other interested parties had first to be consulted and where the approval of the Federal Executive Council was required for all important decisions. Collaboration between the two teams, however, was smooth and effective. Dr. Adedeji spent much of his time commuting between Lagos and Lomé, and travelling to the other regional capitals, explaining to the leaders and officials of those countries the issues involved, noting their advice and recommendations, and keeping them in touch with our progress to date. His efforts were certainly much appreciated by the other leaders, which was one reason why his later appointment as Executive Secretary to the ECA was universally popular within the region.

But before we turn to the last stage in the formation of ECOWAS, it is necessary to review developments taking place elsewhere in the region, particularly among the Francophone states, without whose cooperation there could be no effective regional economic community.

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3. R.I.Onwuka, Development and Integration in West Africa : The Case of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), pp.67-68.
4. Le Monde, 23-24 April 1972 (avoiding alliances); 28 April 1972 (Eyadema not a candidate for presidency of OCAM).
5. Speech of Welcome by General Eyadema, 26 April 1972. There is an account of the proceedings in Lome in Togo-Presse, 26 April,1972; 2 May 1972.
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CHAPTER 7FRENCH-AFRICAN RELATIONS AS THEY AFFECTED REGIONAL INTEGRATION  
IN WEST AFRICA (1969-74)

The majority of West African states were Francophone and their cooperation was as crucial to the success of our regional experiment as that of the other states, including Nigeria. While we were assured, from an early stage, of the support of the English-speaking governments, however, we could not be so confident of securing the approval of all our Francophone colleagues. It was our aim, nevertheless, to avoid, as far as possible, the creation of rival and competing economic *blocs* within the region, which would further divide the West African states and tax the loyalties of individual governments and of the population at large. Hence our insistence on the maximum consultation before the establishment of ECOWAS, and on effective participation by member-states in all subsequent decisions.

The main purpose of ECOWAS was to promote cooperation within the region while reducing the extent and the levels of external dependency. West Africa was not, however, a self-contained unit, either socially or politically. We derive many of our institutions, much of our technology and the greater part of our investment from outside, mainly from Europe and the United States of America. ECOWAS would not quickly change these patterns although it would certainly expect, in time, to modify them. Nor could our region be considered in isolation from the rest of Africa. The proposed West African community was one of the several regional unions, to be created within the framework of the OAU and with the intention of cooperating, one day, in the development of an African Common Market.

A decade after independence West Africa remained closely involved with the affairs of the West European states. Where the former British states were members of the Commonwealth, with its special commercial and diplomatic arrangements, the Francophone countries had their own distinctive forms of association, both with France and with their African neighbours. These attachments would also survive the creation of ECOWAS - although diversification of trade, investment and diplomatic relations was already a major objective of most African governments.

For reasons already mentioned, the ties between France and Francophone West Africa were much closer than those between Britain and her former territories in the region. The English-speaking states had not, in colonial times, formed a single, homogeneous political and administrative unit, while they had long since been accustomed to a degree of independence, in economic as well as political matters, that was sometimes the envy of their Francophone neighbours.

Where the British government, preparing for its entry into the EEC, in 1973, would welcome the prospect of ECOWAS, doubtless hoping to secure wider markets for British exports in West Africa as well as in Western Europe, the French, although anxious to expand their trade with Africa, and with Nigeria in particular, would naturally be sensitive to any proposal that might affect their privileged status within the region. Whatever the French reaction, it was clear to us, in Nigeria, that the Francophone states would be influenced, in varying degrees, by the attitude of the new administration in Paris, after 1969, while their views would to some extent reflect the changing pattern of Franco-African relations during the early 'seventies. These, then, form the main themes of this chapter.

### Franco-African Relations after de Gaulle

De Gaulle's defeat at the 1969 referendum, his subsequent retreat to Colombey, and his death shortly afterwards brought to a head the various, sometimes contradictory, pressures at work in Francophone Africa during the previous decade. The new president, Georges Pompidou, himself a former prime minister, was more familiar with the conduct of domestic and economic rather than external policy, which had been reserved for de Gaulle and his closest advisors. He did not have de Gaulle's international stature, or his close acquaintance with the African leaders, civil and military, or the historical ties that the General had forged with Africa during and immediately after the Second World War.

Nor did he enjoy the same unconditional support from the ruling part in France and from its notables. Some prominent Gaullists held him personally responsible for de Gaulle's defeat, while they and others were also critical of what they considered to be his departures from Gaullist "orthodoxy" - his proposed constitutional changes, however minor, his more open and relaxed foreign policy, with the prospect of closer if very limited collaboration with NATO and its Atlantic ally, and his conciliatory gestures towards Britain and France's European partners, culminating in Britain's formal entry to the EEC in January 1973 - perhaps as a counter-poise to the strength of the West German economy.



There were important changes, too, in African policy, but more in the execution than in the objectives. Where some detente was evident in France's relations with the Anglo-Saxon countries, in a European and to some extent an Atlantic context, and where France was evidently anxious to repair some of the damage to her trading position in Nigeria after the civil war, colonial frontiers remained sacrosanct in Francophone Africa, to be disregarded only where it was to France's advantage to do so.

Continuity of policy was the first consideration and it was significant that Jacques Foccart was brought back as Secretary-General for African and Malagasy Affairs, after his brief expulsion from the Elysée under the interim president, Alain Poher. While accepting a token change in his designation, mainly to satisfy his domestic critics, he quickly resumed his former contacts and soon recovered much of his old influence - until his final replacement after Pompidou's death, in April 1974.

But it was soon clear that some change of emphasis and even direction was needed if the French presence was not to vanish along with General de Gaulle who for many years had been the personal embodiment of the concept. Where relations with France had been virtually frozen during the past decade, subsumed under the broad headings of aid, cooperation and technical assistance, the problem was now to change the form without necessarily altering too much of the content, or undermining the essential objectives of the policy.

Where African policy in the 'sixties had been based on a very few general principles, applied uniformly and fairly consistently throughout most of Africa, with the collusion of a handful of key African figures, such simple and effective administrative expedients would no longer serve a decade later, given the growing disparities between different regions and among individual African states - disparities in their reserves and natural resources, relative wealth, external linkages and strategic importance for the former Metropole. It was political rather than administrative decisions that were now required if the French were to contain the pressures for change that had accumulated in Francophone Africa. The longer such decisions were delayed, the greater the likelihood of Guinea's example being followed by other, non-radical states.

At the centre of the growing debate in the 'seventies, between France and her African partners, were the various treaties of cooperation - economic, technical, military - signed shortly after independence. The first demands for revision coincided with the departure of de Gaulle and relations between the two sides deteriorated further as the new administration in Paris refused to countenance any marked departure from existing policy in Africa. Despite several discreet requests from Niger for re-negotiation of her agreements, beginning in March 1969, there was no reaction at all from Paris - until Diori publicly raised the issue during Pompidou's visit to Niger, in February 1972. <sup>1/</sup>

Meanwhile Cameroon had made a similar request at the beginning of 1972, and the movement for revision soon spread through Central and

West Africa - then to Madagascar after the 'events' there in May 1972. The French could no longer ignore the pressure of demands from black Africa and sought instead to minimise their impact on Franco-African relations. This they hoped to achieve by opening separate negotiations with each country, spreading bi-lateral discussions over a number of years, and firmly resisting any proposal for collective re-negotiation of all or any of the treaties.

Thus an earlier attempt by Niger to interest the Entente in a joint approach to the French Government met with opposition from the Ivory Coast and brought little or no response from the other partners. OCAM was not even permitted to raise the issue as to do so would, it was claimed, infringe the sovereign rights of its members. This argument carried some weight where military and defence agreements were concerned but was much less relevant in the case of the other treaties. Only recently, during 1969-70, the same OCAM states had, with French encouragement, jointly re-negotiated the Yaoundé Convention with the EEC. <sup>2/</sup>

In any case, the movement for revision had less to do with the treaties themselves than with the mounting sense of economic dependence, political subordination and even cultural inferiority that in most cases accompanied them. Francophone leaders were increasingly sensitive to the apparent contrast between their own rather limited autonomy and the much wider independence enjoyed by the former British colonies. To many of them a stable and convertible currency may have seemed a poor compensation for the numerous constraints on development imposed by membership of the Franc Zone. France's unilateral devaluation in 1969, which entailed an automatic and corresponding devaluation of the CFA franc, helped undermine even this argument in favour of monetary discipline.

The call for revision of the cooperation agreements did not constitute an outright rejection of the former Metropole, still less a renunciation of French aid and assistance, but expressed the growing desire among the Francophone states for a new equilibrium between centre and periphery, on terms more favourable to the latter. This had earlier been an important ingredient in the demands for a French 'Commonwealth'; now it was linked with the controversy surrounding 'cooperation', just as later it would fuel the debate between advocates of the Francophone CEAO and those French-speaking leaders who supported our own ECOWAS.

The Pompidou administration lost valuable ground at the outset by failing to respond more promptly and with greater generosity to the requests of their African partners. The French quickly perceived, however, that they could change the form and style of cooperation without threatening either the content or the structures. Indeed, without some reform there would soon be no structures to preserve. The withdrawal of Mauritania from the West African Monetary Union (UMOA), in 1972, to create its own currency, and the subsequent collapse of negotiations for revision of her cooperation agreements with France, were precedents that the French were anxious should not be repeated. However, after May 1972 and a change of regime locally, it was the turn of Madagascar to demand similar concessions : and again negotiations with the French broke down, not so much over the issue of a separate currency as over the question of future military facilities.

Elsewhere in black Africa the French were more successful in resisting the new pressures, assisted perhaps by the extreme poverty

of many of their 'clients' and the rapidly deteriorating economic situation as the effects of the western recession began to spread to other parts of the world. With the revival of the French economy, following the 1969 devaluation, many of the African states were now prepared to settle for much less than they had originally demanded - or even expected. Moreover, the prospect of an independent currency, backed only by a country's reserves and natural resources, soon lost much of its appeal for the small Francophone states. As if to underline the message, President Pompidou warned, in terms reminiscent of General de Gaulle in 1958 : "One can certainly envisage states taking off on their own, but in that case France can no longer guarantee the stability of their currency." <sup>3/</sup>

As France's influence in Africa was now to be secured by economic rather than political means, cooperation began to assume a new character and significance. In November 1962 Pierre Billecocq; junior minister responsible for Cooperation in the Foreign Affairs Ministry, spoke of "a second wind of change" in Africa, and of "a new phase of cooperation" when French involvement would no longer be so pronounced. <sup>4/</sup> A meeting of five (of the six) West African leaders summoned to the Elysée, a year later, to approve the new treaty regulating the activities of the central bank of the region (BCEAO), also took the opportunity to discuss a wider range of issues. They approved a proposal by Hamani Diori that there should, in future, be an annual conference of Francophone African leaders, with a flexible agenda, and in the presence of the French President. <sup>5/</sup>

These developments were accelerated under Pompidou's successor, Giscard d'Estaing, who was elected President in 1974 and proceeded at once to appoint a senior minister, Pierre Abelin, to the new Ministry for Cooperation. By then the new style was so far advanced and so successful that the President of Cameroon, who had been the first to insist on re-negotiation of the cooperation agreements, could now comment : "Anything that can reinforce cooperation is a good thing for Africa." 6/

The French even conceded a package of minor economic reforms which included further decentralisation of the monetary institutions, more rapid Africanisation of their cadres, and great flexibility in the application of monetary policy where African states had accumulated substantial reserves. For the poorest countries, who were unlikely to benefit from these changes, there would be slightly enlarged borrowing facilities, at lower rates of interest, for approved developmental projects.

The trend was towards greater regional differentiation with separate policies for West and Central Africa. However, the object remained the same. The French were not about to dismantle the Franc Zone, or surrender control of policy and the various monetary instruments. They were, however, prepared to devolve much of the work of administration which would require new regional structures, more frequent and regular consultation among governments at that level. Meanwhile the French would continue to rely on national differences and external pressures to maintain the Francophone governments in their present subordinate position.

The French counter-attack was conducted on a broad political and economic front. While Pompidou was in Upper Volta busily cultivating West African Francophone leaders, the Finance Minister, Giscard d'Estaing, was despatched to Brazzaville and the Central African states to reassure leaders there of France's continuing concern and interest in and its awareness of their own distinctive problems. <sup>7/</sup> It was a holding operation, which did not, however, disguise the fact that the Francophone states, even the most moderate and including some of those closest to France in the past, were dissatisfied with their present status. They were increasingly unwilling (or unable) to subordinate their countries interests to those of the Metropole, and were well aware of the new and greatly enhanced economic importance of Nigeria, as an affluent and expanding market for their own produce, and as an alternative source of oil - shortly to be offered, in special circumstances on favourable terms.

They saw no reason why trading relationships in Africa should not now be pursued across linguistic frontiers, particularly as France and Britain would, after January 1973, be partners in the EEC, <sup>8/</sup> and as France herself was encouraging a collective approach to the EEC by the Francophone, and later the African-Caribbean-Pacific countries. But their sense of detachment from *francophonie*, although growing, was by no means complete. Senghor's cultural arguments based on *francophonie* and *eurafrique*, and his increasing tendency in the 'seventies to assimilate and even confuse the North-South division with that between rich Anglo-Saxon and poor Francophone states and, by implication, between a prosperous Nigeria and her impoverished Francophone neighbours, could still - as we will see - strike a responsive chord among Francophone leaders. The battle for ECOWAS had, in that sense, yet to be fought and won.

But it was no longer possible, for any length of time, to subordinate economic to cultural arguments. France, for example, was well aware of the new economic significance of Nigeria, as was the leadership of the Ivory Coast, and both hoped to resume normal diplomatic relations and develop their own commercial ties with Nigeria. Ironically, Senghor seems to have chosen this moment in time to turn sharply away from his former support for rapprochement in Africa, across linguistic boundaries, to defend an under-development thesis based on cultural rather than economic criteria.

#### The Decline of OCAM

The new strains in Franco-African relations were also quickly evident inside OCAM and at two levels. There was the growing regional division between the West and Central African states, as the latter complained of their previous neglect by France and now of the subordination of their interests to those of the more prosperous, if not always better-endowed, West African states. Within West Africa there was also increased tension between the coastal and land-locked states and even among the land-locked states themselves - the result of earlier and long-standing disputes aggravated by a prolonged drought and a rapidly deteriorating balance-of-payments situation, and reflecting their dependence on oil and on goods manufactured abroad, mostly in France.

Where the Entente had once provided the core and much of the inner cohesion of OCAM, the sub-regional group had itself split over its attitude to the Nigerian civil war. With the end of the war there came



further divisions, following the appeal by Houphouët-Boigny, in November 1970, for a new and peaceful initiative vis-a-vis the South African regime. As other states, including Nigeria, prepared for a concerted offensive, within the United Nations and elsewhere, against the white minority regimes of southern Africa, the Ivory Coast President announced that "the only invasion of South Africa that I would like to see should be that of African diplomats." <sup>9/</sup> Such a statement could only strengthen *apartheid* and damage African interests - just as international attention began again to focus seriously on the problem of southern Africa.

This new initiative by Houphouët-Boigny was again supported by the French, which was not surprising in view of France's extensive trade in arms with South Africa and the return of Jacques Foccart to the Elysée following Pompidou's election. But now the African response was even more critical and less encouraging than in 1968, when France, her allies and Foccart had embarked on the campaign to split Nigeria. Within the Entente only Dahomey and Niger openly supported the move, while Togo and Upper Volta observed a discreet silence, reserving any criticism for private meetings of the group. Of the remaining Francophone states only Gabon and Madagascar approved and Gabon was the one Central African state to do so. <sup>10/</sup> In West Africa, besides the two Entente states already mentioned, Houphouët-Boigny's only other ally was Dr. Kofi Busia, head of the new civilian government in Ghana, who was later received in Paris by the French President.

The Ivory Coast leader may have hoped to use OCAM to secure a full debate on the issue within the OAU which could only serve to weaken

and discredit that organisation. But the issue threatened to split the Francophone organisation even more effectively and more completely than the earlier question of support for the Nigerian rebellion. The OCAM summit, in January 1971, declined even to discuss the matter. <sup>11/</sup> Senghor, trying to preserve a facade of Francophone unity, was content to call only for "a dialogue about the dialogue" - and that placed an additional and unwelcome strain on relations with neighbouring Mauritania, whose President was then acting as chairman of the OAU. <sup>12/</sup>

During 1972 the civilian regimes in Ghana, Madagascar and Dahomey, which had supported 'dialogue' were all overthrown by more radical military leaders hostile to the South African regime and, in the case of the last two, critical of their country's former dependency on France. That, and the condemnation of 'dialogue' by a large majority of the OAU, led by Nigeria, were the most serious of the diplomatic reverses suffered by France and the Ivory Coast in the decade after 1963.

For many Francophone states continued membership in the OCAM had been conditional on an agenda from which all controversial political issues were excluded and a context that did not give undue prominence to the French connection. The controversy surrounding the admission to membership of the Congo-Kinshasa (Zaire) in 1965, over the Nigerian civil war in 1968, and, most recently, over 'dialogue' with South Africa, convinced a growing number of Francophone states that their inclusion in OCAM was more of an embarrassment, domestic and international, than an advantage.

Zaire itself withdrew early in 1972, followed by Cameroon and Chad in July 1973, after both had previously complained of domination of the organisation by certain West African states. The President of Chad had also called for discussions with the English-speaking states about the terms of their possible future association with the EEC. "We want to keep our privileges (*droite acquis*) but, above all, we wish to collaborate with the Anglophone states." <sup>13/</sup>

The resignation of President Tombalbaye of Chad as president of OCAM, and before the completion of his second term, left the organisation temporarily without a leader - although Tombalbaye had insisted he had never been more than "a figurehead". <sup>14/</sup> But the defection of Cameroon removed the organisation's headquarters, until then in Yaoundé. Finally, in August, 1973, the new military government in Madagascar opted out of OCAM, followed by Congo-Brazzaville, whose ties with the organisation had always been tenuous.

Even in West Africa and among the Entente members, the President of Togo refused to accept the presidency of OCAM despite hosting the 1972 summit in his capital. <sup>15/</sup> Two years later the Togolese were more openly critical of the Francophone organisation.

OCAM must disappear to make room for an institution that would be less political and more technical; less subject to external influence and more African; less subservient to the will of certain states and more egalitarian; and not so exclusively based on language.

<sup>16/</sup>

Dahomey, under its new military leadership, after 1972, was openly dismissive of the organisation and its "really negative features" and proposed drastic structural changes and a new name.<sup>17/</sup> Here the entry of Mauritius, in 1969, subsequently proved convenient in that, when Madagascar withdrew, there was no immediate need for a change of name or designation - what had briefly been described as 'OCAMM' reverted to its former title. The entry of Mauritius, however, was also a turning point in that its dual membership of OCAM and the Commonwealth served to remind others of the artificial nature of the linguistic division and its dubious relevance in Africa a decade after independence.

#### The French West African Federation (AOF) Reborn

But if OCAM could no longer remain "a French club", or serve to expand the frontiers of *francophonie* - as with the inclusion first of Zaire and the other former Belgian territories, and later of Mauritius and the Seychelles - the French at least had no further use for it. Thus a Gaullist minister, Joseph Comiti, conceded that OCAM might be both "too large" and "too small" - a comprehensive diagnosis of its shortcomings, following on the Mauritius summit of the organisation, in May 1973, which was attended by only three Heads of State and two Heads of Government.<sup>18/</sup>

The same minister also confirmed that new initiatives and new structures were probably required if the Francophone states were to retain their distinctive character and these former associations. These structures should perhaps be regional in character, providing closer, more frequent and more meaningful contacts among the leaders, and permitting a greater concentration on economic problems.<sup>19/</sup>

Such proposals accorded well with the views of Léopold Senghor, who had campaigned long and vigorously on behalf of regional cooperation in Africa, closely associated in his view with federal and confederal forms of government. But where the French were now ready to abandon OCAM, the Senegalese leader insisted on keeping it. As a broad, confederal framework it would, he argued, impart a sense of coherence and continuity to the operation of the future regional bodies. These in turn would regroup the Francophone states of West and Central Africa, and possibly even the islands of the Indian Ocean.

At an emergency meeting of foreign ministers of the ten remaining OCAM states, in August 1973, Senghor won a reprieve for the organisation, from an otherwise rather critical audience, by citing the conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, then taking place in Ottawa, and pleading for a comparable show of solidarity by the Francophone states. These, he reminded the ministers, were neither as large nor as populous as some members of the Commonwealth, nor as wealthy and influential as some members of the Arab League, and could not, therefore, afford to neglect their own cultural affinities or abandon their remaining organisational ties. <sup>20/</sup>

The Francophone states, he concluded, had no reason to feel apologetic or defensive about their cultural heritage or their continuing and close ties with France, as OCAM had helped its members resist "the naturally imperialist and colonialist tendencies", not only of French capitalism, but of all the capitalisms of the developed societies. "If OCAM did not exist it would be necessary to invent it." <sup>21/</sup>

Thus Senghor, who had initially opposed the creation of OCAM became, in 1972, its president and spokesman - in the absence, it is true, of any more suitable and more willing candidate - and briefly set about its reform so as to ensure its survival. At the same time, for reasons we will examine later, Senghor retreated from his earlier proposals for regional cooperation across colonial frontiers, which he had eloquently defended in 1967-8, to a more exclusive conception of regional integration confined initially to the Francophone states, and based on language, culture and existing monetary arrangements.

These changes in policy and the crisis within OCAM were not unrelated - coinciding, as they did, with the end of the Nigerian civil war in 1970. Nigeria emerged from the war as an important power in its own right, determined to have a role and influence, in Africa and elsewhere, commensurate with its size, population, wealth and military potential. Embarrassed, perhaps, by the sudden and unexpected collapse of 'Biafran' resistance, France and her leading African partners were even more surprised by our rapid economic recovery after the war, culminating in the oil 'boom' of 1973.

The divisions within *francophonie* themselves reflected, to some extent, the centrifugal pressures building up in West and Central Africa, where Nigeria and Zaire, respectively, acted increasingly as poles of economic attraction for their smaller and less affluent Francophone neighbours. The French evidently feared a substantial reduction in their influence, further fragmentation within the French-speaking community, and the relegation of their principal African allies to a subordinate role and status.

It was not only the future of OCAM that seemed to be at stake, but the survival of other Francophone institutions and, perhaps, of the French presence itself. Such fears, however, exaggerated as they may appear now, reflected growing uncertainty in France, in the 'seventies, about developments elsewhere in the world, particularly as they might affect our domestic economy. After 1973 the main priorities were:

- (1) To ensure continuity in the supply of oil and other essential commodities from abroad, and
- (2) To secure existing markets from foreign competitors, while increasing exports and generally maintaining a favourable balance of trade.

The solution adopted by the French was to develop and extend their own economic relations with the two large, mineral-rich and independent African powers, Nigeria and Zaire, while providing alternative structures for the former 'dependencies' so as to minimise the risk of further economic penetration and possible political 'contamination'.

Where OCAM was no longer effective at a continental level, the French experimented, after November 1973, with a West African proposal : for a less formal conference of Francophone leaders, meeting each year with the French President, usually outside France, to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern. After an inauspicious opening the first summit in Bangui, in March 1975, attracted more favourable attention when it recommended the creation of a *Fonds de Solidarité Africain*, with France to subscribe half the total capital. <sup>22/</sup>

But if OCAM was "too small" in that sense, it was also "too large" in the context of the regional economic groupings now favoured by the French

in West as well as Central Africa. It was here that they found the most challenge although it was here too that they could apply some of their most effective monetary and fiscal sanctions. The French were particularly concerned at the success of our efforts, after 1970, to revive the earlier movement towards regional integration. The strong support we received from Togo, and the interest shown by our neighbours in closer cooperation soon convinced them of the need for a viable, Francophone alternative.

The unsuccessful West African Customs Union (UDEAO) was finally buried, without further ado, in May 1970, while French officials and their African counterparts attempted to mobilise support within the region for a formula that would integrate the Francophone states more effectively, while continuing to exclude Guinea and the English-speaking states. With such small populations and such limited resources the only plausible coalition was one comprising Senegal and the Ivory Coast and as many as possible of their respective 'clients'.

The problem was, firstly, to reconcile the two principal Francophone leaders, Senghor and Houphouët-Boigny, and, secondly, to regroup successfully the remaining Francophone states in such a way as to guard against further encroachment by Nigeria. In December 1971, Senghor made an unprecedented visit to Houphouët-Boigny in the Ivory Coast, ending decades of rivalry between the leaders and their respective states.<sup>23/</sup> Growing fear of Nigeria had at last achieved what even the French had not previously been able to accomplish. This much publicised reconciliation then provided the basis for the new Francophone grouping, the West African Economic Community (CEAO), and was the signal for more open competition between advocates of the rival schemes.



The object of the French, and those like Senghor who now cooperated closely with them, was to recover the initiative they had recently lost to Nigeria, so as to guarantee that the terms and conditions of any future regional community were acceptable to France and her African allies. The new alliance was clearly defensive : to confine Nigeria's economic and political influence where, formerly, the Entente (and OCAM) had served to isolate and contain the pressures from Ghana and Guinea.

Once Nigeria and Togo announced their intention, in April/May 1972, to create the nucleus of the future ECOWAS, the issue was joined - as the French and their partners intensified their efforts to ensure that their organisation would be first in the field. The CEAO was officially launched, in June 1972, at a conference where prospective members could agree on nothing more than the name and the decision to regroup. Nigeria's exclusion was criticised by some of our Francophone neighbours as an unnecessary and provocative gesture. <sup>24/</sup>

The central problem for the sponsors of the CEAO was to make such a restricted organisation attractive to the majority of the Francophone states within the region. Coinciding, as the initiative did, with the most serious drought in recent history, affecting all the Sahel states, and with considerable uncertainty about the international economy, the task was not an easy one. Where more positive inducements failed there were the negative arguments based on fear of Nigeria, its size, population and wealth. Our Francophone supporters were then advised that the entry of Nigeria and the English-speaking states was not a practical proposition during the formative phase of the community : that the administrative and

other problems were too great and would take years to overcome. Other members might, however, be admitted at a later date once the organisation was operative.

The implication was that Nigeria and the English-speaking states would join the CEAO, if at all, only on terms already decided by their Francophone colleagues, and approved by France. Like the British joining the EEC in 1973, we would be at an additional disadvantage in having to subscribe to an organisation whose personnel, policies and procedures had been established in advance and could not, therefore, easily be modified to meet our own requirements. In these circumstances it was our task, and our duty, to try by every honest and fair means to convince the Francophone states of the greater advantages to be derived from the wider regional community - the English-speaking states already being favourably disposed towards cooperation across linguistic and colonial barriers.

France, Senegal and the Ivory Coast managed quickly, in the 'seventies, to agree a common solution to a common problem : Nigeria. They responded to our initiatives with a defensive alliance, reminiscent of their earlier attempt to contain the radical, pan-African pretensions of Ghana and to minimise the effect of Guinea's rebellion. Then they had replied in kind, with political as well as economic weapons, including OCAM. Now further economic incentives were required while the only viable structures to hand were regional - a legacy of colonial administration in French West (AOF) and Equatorial Africa (AEF).

But Nigeria, unlike Nkrumah's Ghana, did not threaten the sovereignty or integrity of its Francophone neighbours - who were among

our leading supporters in the region. We wanted instead to retain their goodwill and strengthen their independence as the best guarantee of our own security. It was to this end that the Federal Military Government proposed economic cooperation and not territorial annexation. We even agreed with Cameroon to a new maritime boundary between our two states so as to achieve a lasting and secure peace in this sensitive border zone.

I believe that our policies after 1970, emphasising mutual assistance and the promotion of trade and other forms of cooperation, were and still are the most effective means of achieving economic growth in our region and Africa. They were also better attuned to the region's needs and aspirations than the monetary policies imposed by the French, or the vague panaceas offered by radical politicians in the past.

To retain their influence within the region the French had to concede much of our case. They were forced to rely less on political leverage and more on economic incentives, and to give greater priority to regional rather than continental cooperation. Having conceded the principle and the utility of regional cooperation, in West and Central Africa, there was nothing to justify either the creation of new sub-regional groupings or continued opposition to our own regional proposals. <sup>25/</sup> Moreover, the case for economic exclusiveness within West Africa was even less convincing and more open to criticism than the earlier defence of territorial segregation based on a form of linguistic or cultural apartheid. However ambitious its economic goals, any West African grouping that did not include Nigeria could carry little weight either inside or outside the region.

# REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

1. Le Monde, 26 January 1972.
2. Le Monde, 29 January 1969.
3. Le Monde, 23 November 1972.
4. Ibid. M. Billecocq, Minister for Cooperation, spoke of the possibility of two franc zones, one *pure et dure*, as at present, and a second where states would have their own currencies, credit and investment policies but would nevertheless retain the CFA franc as their basic unit of currency for external trade.
5. Le Monde, 15 November, 1973, 16 November 1973.  
According to Diori: "We want the West African Monetary Zone (UMOA) to become a zone of solidarity for development and not to remain simply a zone of monetary solidarity." Le Monde, 1 August 1973.
6. Le Monde, 22 June, 1974. Cameroon did not, however, attend the Franco-African Summits in Paris (1973) or Bangui (1975), having earlier withdrawn from OCAM in 1973.
7. Le Monde, 23 November 1972.
8. The point was made by President Pompidou, himself, visiting Niger. Le Monde, 27 January 1972. And again by President Senghor at the OCAM meeting in Lome, in 1972. Le Monde, 28 April 1972.
9. Quoted in K.W.Gundy, Confrontation and Accommodation in Southern Africa, p.142.
10. Gundy, p.143.
11. Gundy, p.144.
12. Le Monde, 11 January 1972.
13. Le Monde, 2 February 1971.
14. Le Monde, 17 February 1972.
15. Le Monde, 26 April 1972.
16. Le Monde, 7 August 1974.
17. West Africa, (Comiti) 20 August 1973; also West Africa, 3 September 1973.
18. Le Monde, 6 July 1973; Le Monde, 8 May 1973. (Mauritius Summit)  
"The summit meeting at Port Louis in May, which only attracted three Presidents and two Prime Ministers, indicated a general lack of enthusiasm for the grouping, which had already lost Zaire and the Congo in preceding months." West Africa, 9 July 1973.

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19. Le Monde, 6 July 1973. Shortly before the ministerial conference to consider the future of OCAM, in Dakar in August 1973, Le Monde, "had published .... an 'obituary' editorial, stating that OCAM was *depassée*, and that new formulae must be worked out; the Paris-based Jeune Afrique reminded its readership that it had sounded the alarm on the mortal illness of OCAM long ago ; even the semi-official Senegalese daily, Le Soleil, thought it better to prepare public opinion for the death of OCAM." West Africa, 3 September 1973.
  
20. President Senghor claimed that what legitimised OCAM was that its members were united by the continent and by ethnic ties.  
 "We are all in Africa south of the Sahara and we all have black blood, even the Hovas and the Indians of Mauritius. Above all, we all share culturally the values of *negritude* and *francophonie*." West Africa, 20 August 1973. It was only the last trait, of course that could be said to distinguish potential members of OCAM from the rest of black Africa.
  
21. West Africa, 20 August 1973
  
22. There was a kind of contest to see who could arrive last at the Summit. The French President had to wait while the opening was postponed for some twenty-four hours - even then President Bongo of Gabon was delayed at an OPEC meeting in Algiers. Giscard d'Estaing assured other leaders that "we do not seek to create any zone of influence in Africa. There was as little colonial sentiment at Bangui as possible..."  
Le Monde, 6 March 1975, 7 March, 1975, 11 March 1975.
  
23. Le Monde, 17 December 1971.
  
24. There is an account of the conference in Le Monde, 6 June 1972.
  
25. As a West Africa editorial commented in November 1974:  
 "in spite of the existence of numerous groupings covering only the Francophone territories, it is now not possible for any Francophone African leader publicly to oppose the idea of an economic community whose very object is to override the former economic divisions between the Francophone and Anglophone countries." West Africa, 18 November, 1974.

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PART III

CHAPTER 8FORMATION OF THE COMMUNAUTE ECONOMIQUE DE L'AFRIQUE  
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From our observation, France and the Ivory Coast, starting from slightly different premises, managed, early in the 'seventies, to agree a joint solution to their mutual problem, namely Nigeria. They then tried to solicit the cooperation of Senegal in this regard and with limited success. Their concern stemmed not so much from our rapid recovery and vigorous economic performance after the civil war, as from our determination to share that good fortune with our neighbours by enlisting their cooperation in creating a broad-based, regional community, open to all West African states. It seemed to them that Nigeria would dominate any such West African economic grouping.

Our proposal did not seem to be well received by the French, who immediately began considering alternative and rival schemes for economic integration in the area - but at a sub-regional rather than a regional level, and within rather than across linguistic boundaries. Appropriating the title that, until then, had been used to denote the wider West African Economic Community (WAEC, or CEAO in French), they opted, instead, for a 'regional' grouping which came eventually to include only six of the nine Francophone states, and could not hope to match our own project either in size, population, level of economic activity or volume of trade.

Where our regional initiative was the product of long deliberation and embodied the lessons of the previous decade, France and her West African

partners were content to improvise yet another variation on the theme of Francophone cooperation, more restricted in membership than OCAM, but also more ambitious in scope than either the Entente or the Organisation of Senegal River States (OERS). The new community would, in the end, comprise members from each of these sub-regional groups.

It has been our endeavour, and that of most other African leaders, to help fashion a region and a continent where African interests would predominate, where policies would correspond to African priorities, and where political structures would faithfully reflect African aspirations. But the French and their allies seemed to want only to salvage something from the wreck of the former West African Federation (AOF) and the later, but equally abortive, Customs Unions (UDAO and UDEAO).

Their object was a limited economic integration, largely confined to the Ivory Coast, Senegal and their respective 'client' states. This may have seemed the best, the quickest, and perhaps the only way to contain Nigeria's growing influence within the region. But, to be successful, they had first to convince the remaining Francophone states that their future development could best be served by continued dependence on France, and on other external powers, including members of the EEC, rather than by uniting in a voluntary association of all West African states.

Our opponents and critics perhaps failed to realise that, if Nigeria was now more influential within the region, and in Africa as a whole, it was not just that we had acquired considerable economic strength and military capability, important though that was. There was certainly

no show of force or display of economic coercion on our part although, wherever possible, we did try to direct our own economic development into those channels that might be of benefit to particular countries and to the region as a whole. Rather, our influence sprang from the economic difficulties confronting African governments at this time, and the growing conviction that they could not have real independence and development without consenting to a degree of economic cooperation and a measure of political consensus. Without Nigeria, however, there could be no meaningful integration within the region now, and no successful African Common Market in the future.

#### France and the CEAO

French support for a new regional community in West Africa, to be confined, at least initially, to the Francophone states, was evident from the start. It was soon apparent, too, that it was Nigeria's economic strength and influence within the region that were the main cause of French anxiety. That was clear, not only from President Georges Pompidou's three successive tours of West and Central Africa, in 1971-2, but also from his remarks to Hamani Diori, during his visit to Niger, in January 1972. In Niamey he was reported as saying:

It is only logical that French and English-speaking African states should cooperate more closely. And I believe that the entry of Great Britain into the EEC will facilitate such cooperation.

But it "should not be in one direction only" and "a fair balance must be maintained".

It is therefore appropriate that the French-speaking countries should harmonise their views and coordinate their efforts, vis-a-vis English-speaking Africa and Nigeria in particular, so as to ensure that any subsequent decisions are taken on a basis of equality and by mutual consent.

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That also seems to have been the tenor of his remarks in the other African capitals that he visited although the discussions elsewhere were not so fully reported.

#### The Ivory Coast and the CEAO

Meanwhile Houphouët-Boigny was himself ready, by the 'seventies, to return to the theme of sub-regional organisation. He was doubtless disillusioned with OCAM, which had declined to consider his proposals either for recognition, in some form, of 'Biafra', in 1969, or for 'dialogue' with South Africa in 1971. Moreover, pressure from within the organisation for closer contacts with the English-speaking states was becoming a source of embarrassment, as was mounting criticism of French and Ivory Coast policy. Finally, there was the sudden and rapid contraction in membership; the defection of most of the Central African states left OCAM leaders with the taxing and delicate problem of trying to accommodate countries at opposite ends of the continent - seeking to reconcile West African interests with those of the islands in the Indian Ocean.

Where Senghor would attempt to do just that, in his pursuit of international dialogue at a continental level, Houphouët-Boigny was not a leader to cherish vain illusions and certainly not for long. Although in no hurry to quit an organisation he had been instrumental in founding and which remained in existence, despite its many problems and vicissitudes, the President of the Ivory Coast was already considering other possible forms of Francophone cooperation, drawing on his long experience of the relatively successful Entente.

But the Entente was now too small to provide the necessary stimulus for further industrial growth on the part of its leading member. Nor could the Ivory Coast continue to rely on its own economic performance to counter the growing influence of a re-united Nigeria on other members of the group, notably Niger, Dahomey and Togo. Which may well account for Houphouët-Boigny's support for the 'regional' alternative being widely canvassed by the French.

While the greater prominence now enjoyed by Nigeria, and also Zaire, may have constituted a challenge to the French presence in West and Central Africa and to the cohesion of OCAM, Houphouët-Boigny was probably much more concerned with the potential threat that Nigeria posed to the Entente and by that means, to the future development of the Ivory Coast. Our immediate and near neighbours not only comprised a majority of the Entente but were also among the most active supporters of a regional community across linguistic lines.

Moreover, the group was so constituted that the defection of any one member might well lead to the loss of others. Thus an alliance between Nigeria and Togo, the most recent member of the Entente, would soon isolate Dahomey, whose withdrawal would then create serious problems for Niger, while a similar decision by Niger would inevitably have implications for neighbouring Upper Volta.

The collapse of the Entente would leave the Ivory Coast and its economy in a very exposed and vulnerable position. And in 1970 the Entente was already in decline. It had been created a decade earlier, partly to dissuade neighbouring countries from developing even closer ties with Nigeria, partly to prevent Upper Volta, crucial to the Ivorian economy, from joining either the Mali Federation or the Union of African States, and partly to isolate the radical regimes in Ghana and Guinea.

But it became increasingly divided following the advent of military government in Upper Volta, in January 1966, the removal of Nkrumah the following month, and the outbreak of rebellion in Nigeria in 1967. The boycott of the Regional Group summit in Monrovia, in 1968, had been its most recent and most important collective act, and even that was essentially negative and far from unanimous. What was initially envisaged as a political body, with responsibility for coordinating the politics and the policies of member-states, both domestic and foreign, was increasingly confined to economic issues of mutual interest to the members, and to a style of reciprocal bargaining that was not conducive to any form of large-scale innovation.



By 1970, however, the Ivory Coast president seems to have concluded that it was time to breath new life into the Entente, even if it involved some limited extension of its fairly narrow activities, the release of additional funds from the Ivory Coast for projects in the adjoining states, and consideration of other countries as possible candidates for future membership. For the first time since 1966, Houphouët-Boigny was once again prepared to invest considerable time, effort and additional finance to secure the continued support of his sub-regional partners.

Thus, at a meeting of the Entente in Abidjan, in mid-May 1970, it was agreed that the 'seventies should be designated the decade of 'regional cooperation'. And to mark the occasion Ghana, under Dr. Kofi Busia, was given observer status on the Entente's Land Transportation Committee, while Mali made a limited entry to the organisation, via the new Common Market for Meat and Livestock (*Communauté économique du bétail et de la viande*). <sup>2/</sup>

In the past the marketing of beef had been a lively and contentious issue in Francophone West Africa, particularly as Upper Volta and Niger, also major producers, were full members of the Entente and therefore enjoyed privileged access to the Ivory Coast and French markets. Mali belonged to the rival Senegal River Organisation which did not have comparable processing and marketing facilities. Accordingly, and with some justification, Mali complained that this discriminatory arrangement was contrary to the spirit if not the letter of the West African Customs Union (UNEAO).

But the main purpose of the meeting in Abidjan was to try to coordinate the policies of the members prior to a conference in Bamako, Mali, where the future of the West African Customs Union was to be debated. The Union had long been ineffective, largely because of the intense rivalry in the past between its two principal members, the Ivory Coast and Senegal. But there was now pressure from the French and from other interested parties, to re-structure the Union as the basis of a new regional grouping. In this way the French hoped that their African partners could regain the initiative and, at the very least, dictate the manner and the pace of future integration in West Africa.

Member states were all agreed that the existing Customs Union served no very useful purpose and had failed in almost every respect. Where they differed, however, was in their conception of the community that was to replace it. Where Senegal and the Sahel states continued to favour a community that would be regional in character as well as in name, grouping all the West African states in the manner of the earlier Regional Group, the Ivory Coast and the French wanted an organisation regional in name only, and confined, at least initially, to the Francophone states.

It is likely that Houphouët-Boigny already envisaged some form of collaboration with Senegal, Mali and Mauritania, to produce an organisation more regional in appearance than the existing sub-regional groupings, and with a more viable economic base and greater opportunities for growth. An organisation, moreover, that would be secure from the kind of divisions that had destroyed the UDEAO, would be better able to attract

support from the poorer, landlocked states of the Sahel, and would also be capable of withstanding growing Nigerian pressure from the East and renewed Algerian pressure from the North. <sup>3/</sup> Such a community would also be well placed to bargain with the French for the declining receipts from the Ministry of Cooperation.

By the 'seventies the Ivory Coast was already beginning to pay a much higher price for its dependency on French investment and personnel. Hence the new emphasis by the government on 'indigenisation' and its insistence that, in an increasingly competitive and uncertain world, 'unity is strength'. Where the Ivory Coast had been largely responsible for the 'balkanisation' of French West Africa in the 'fifties, when it had seemed the best and only way to accelerate its economic development, Houphouët-Boigny was now apparently convinced that further growth would depend on greater cooperation - which should not be confined to the Entente but extended to the other Francophone states of the region. If there was to be a new regional and French-speaking community, however, he was determined that the Entente should have the same central and privileged place that it had occupied within OCAM.

#### Senegal and the CEAO

Senghor, for his part, had already begun the long process of disengagement from his country's domestic politics which was the result of his growing preoccupation with global issues, now mainly economic, and was reflected in his sponsorship of ambitious schemes for international dialogue. It was from this vantage point that Senghor judged the relevance and utility of an organisation like OCAM, which he now resolutely defended,

despite his early opposition and the disproportionate demands it made on his time and energy.

While campaigning for greater international understanding and cooperation at the 'summit', Senghor nevertheless remained attached to his view of development as being culturally determined, and as radiating outwards from Paris, Dakar, and other world centres in a series of concentric but overlapping circles. Thus his new global interests did not detract from his continuing concern with regional cooperation, particularly in West Africa.

Senghor had been a consistent advocate of integration at almost every level of government during the 'fifties and 'sixties, when he could be described as a leader whose ideas were well in advance of his time. One unfortunate consequence, however, was that almost all his major initiatives were unsuccessful. The Mali Federation had broken up within a year of its creation, but not before its early independence had brought about the collapse of Senghor's other important initiative at the time, the French Community. The West African Customs Union of the 'sixties was no more successful in the end than the West African Federation that had preceded it. The West African Regional Group failed shortly after Senghor had assumed the responsibility for reviving it.

After a successful conference in Niamey, in 1969, *francophonie*, which failed to get de Gaulle's unequivocal approval, nevertheless suffered from his resignation that year, his death in 1970, and the changed economic

climate of the new decade. Defeated over the creation of OCAM, in 1965, Senghor was left struggling in the 'seventies, virtually alone, to keep the organisation in existence. Finally, the Organisation of the Senegal River States (OERS), launched under another name in July 1963, and reorganised in 1967, with more ambitious goals, never managed to fulfil the initial hopes of its founder.

The main reason for the failure of the sub-regional body was the fluctuating relationship between Senghor and the President of neighbouring Guinea. Where Sékou Touré had frequently refused in the past to attend meetings of the ruling body, this attitude hardened into a prolonged and systematic boycott of the organisation following the Portuguese-mounted invasion of Conakry in November 1970. Senghor had little alternative but to abandon the organisation at the end of 1971 so as to form a new body, the OMVS, without the participation of Guinea and with more modest economic objectives. <sup>4/</sup> Meanwhile, Mali's new but limited participation in the Entente, after May 1970, and Mauritania's membership of the Maghreb Union, in 1972, further restricted Senghor's opportunities for manoeuvre within the region.

The Ivory Coast and her African partners, and also France, were not without some responsibility for the failure of several of these schemes, including the West African Regional Group in 1968. Indeed, Senghor may well have concluded that no future regional initiative stood any chance of success without French and Francophone support, and the backing of the Entente. His first priority in the 'seventies was to try

and secure that support. Events seemed initially to favour him as, without Senegal, France and the Ivory Coast could not stem the mounting pressure within the region for a West African Economic Community.

Senghor, himself, seemed increasingly concerned about the feasibility of reconciling the interests of the smaller Francophone states with those of Nigeria and its English-speaking partners. There had evidently been no such problem when he despatched President Ould Daddah, of Mauritania, to seek our continued support for the Regional Group, at the end of 1967. But circumstances were very different then, with civil war and armed conflict in Nigeria and our economy looking decidedly vulnerable.

The 'seventies however, presented another and very different picture. The Francophone states were themselves experiencing economic crisis, partly the result of drought, but also a consequence of the world recession, while *francophonie*, itself, was now a prey to internal division. Nigeria, however, was not only secure in its rediscovered unity, but was experiencing an economic boom with rising oil exports accompanied by a substantial increase in oil prices. And just as the civil war had shown the need for greater cooperation within West Africa on a more stable and permanent basis, the Federal Military Government was now able to give full and substantial support to the regional movement.

It was no coincidence that Senghor, at the same time, moved away from his earlier unequivocal support for a distinctively West African

grouping to a more complex and increasingly ambivalent position. In the first and formative stage of regional union he came, like France and the Ivory Coast, to favour a purely Francophone Community. This might later provide the basis for a more comprehensive grouping, across linguistic frontiers, extending "from Mauritania to Zaire" and even beyond. <sup>5/</sup> The aim, of course, was not to overcome national differences, as Senghor claimed, but rather to try to secure the entry into the community of Zaire, and other Central African states, so as to help balance the admission of Nigeria. More ambitious and even less plausible, was his later support for an Atlantic Community of African States - which was West African only in the sense that it would not include East and North African countries, while South Africa would presumably be excluded. <sup>6/</sup>

#### Creation of the CEAO

In the latter part of May 1970 Senghor seemed ready for a new regional initiative encompassing the Francophone states but aiming at the progressive and rapid incorporation of the other countries, including Nigeria. Following the earlier meeting of the Entente and probable discussions between Senegal and Mali, members of the West African Customs Union (UDEAO) assembled in Bamako, the Mali capital, at the invitation of President Moussa Traoré. <sup>7/</sup>

There was general agreement from the outset that the customs union was not functioning in a satisfactory manner, just as there was widespread support for Traoré's suggestion that it should be replaced by a new West African Economic Community (*Communauté Economique de l'Afrique Occidentale*,

or CEAO). This would then be open to all West African states, including Togo, which was not a member of the UDEAO but was represented in Bamako by an observer.

The objectives of the CEAO were to improve transportation and communication links among the member-states, and to promote industrial development throughout the new community, while favouring trade in agricultural products as well as in manufactured goods. Members would have to devise appropriate fiscal and customs measures that would enable them to achieve these objectives within a limited period of time. A protocol of agreement was then initialled on May 21, and a further meeting was proposed for November 1, 1971, also at Bamako, when the Treaty would be discussed and signed and the detailed arrangements would hopefully be finalised. That conference did not take place until June 1972, while the CEAO only became operational in April 1973.

After the meeting the unsuccessful West African Customs Union was finally buried, without further ado, while French officials and their African counterparts attempted to mobilise support inside the region for a formula that would be more effective than the UDEAO and also more attractive to potential members. With such small populations and such limited resources the task was not an easy one.

The first problem was to reconcile the *frères ennemis*. the Ivory Coast and Senegal, which was one reason for President Pompidou's decision to visit both states in the course of 1971. Mali, too, had a



key role to play on account of its consistent support for schemes of regional integration, its membership of the Senegal River Organisation and its recent links with the Entente. Mali's pivotal situation in the western half of the region and its evident interest in diversifying means of access to the coast, made that country a major protagonist of reconciliation between Abidjan and Dakar and the two rival sub-regional groupings.

The next problem was to regroup the remaining Francophone states so as to guard against any further 'encroachment' by Nigeria. The French, in particular, were ready to exploit fears of Nigeria's size and economic potential in order to win backing among the smaller Francophone states. For them the object of the exercise was to forestall our own attempts at promoting regional integration across former colonial frontiers, and to ensure that any future West African community would need the prior approval of the Francophone states, acting together under their customary *chefs de file*.

From the outset there was a sense of urgency and a spirit of improvisation about the CEAO - while its development closely reflected the rhythm of our own preparations for the formation of ECOWAS. Among the principal advocates of the proposed Francophone community were experienced French advisers, notably M. Jacques David, architect of the Central and also the West African Customs Unions (UDEAC and UDEAO), who had been active in Francophone Africa since 1947, and was a well-known critic of integration across linguistic (and monetary) lines. 8/

In his view the lesson to be drawn from previous West African failures, in the area of economic integration, was not to try to expand into more complex unions, with the participation of English-speaking states, but instead to devise new and more effective methods of cooperation within the French-speaking fraternity. Fear of Nigeria on account of its size and economic strength, was cited by David as a sufficient and pressing reason for the smaller Francophone states to unite. <sup>9/</sup> And as the title of the CEAO was that usually reserved for the wider regional grouping, it was difficult to escape the conclusion that the aim of French policy at this time was to pre-empt the Nigerian initiative then being widely and openly discussed throughout West Africa.

Whatever the ultimate object of the CEAO, its immediate purpose was not to replace one failed customs union with another, - since it was now agreed that common external tariffs were difficult to operate between countries at very different levels of development. Rather, the intention was to substitute a more complex and integrated structure, reflecting the experience of other, more successful, economic experiments undertaken, not only by the EEC, but also by the Francophone states of Central Africa, particularly the Central African Customs Union (UDEAC).

Francophone leaders felt that UDEAO had failed because it was concerned with the technicalities of customs arrangements rather than with the real issues of economic development and regional integration. Looming behind, and encouraged by some old French hands from the pre-independence period, was the desire to re-constitute the erstwhile AOF, the great ensemble of the colonial era. <sup>10/</sup>

Within the proposed community there would be a "zone of organised trade" for agricultural produce, and a system of preferential treatment for industrial goods originating within the sub-region - with the least developed and least industrialised states receiving pre-determined levels of compensation for the resulting loss of customs revenue. While the Ivory Coast and Senegal and some of the other coastal states stood to benefit most from the provision for an industrial common market, it was hoped that the creation of a Community Development Fund, to equalise economic opportunities throughout the region, would be sufficient to ensure the support of the other, land-locked states. The Fund was modelled on similar provisions in the UDEAC and its incorporation in the CEAO was designed to neutralise the opposition that was already beginning to emerge among some of the states of the Sahel. <sup>11/</sup>

#### Reconciliation between the Ivory Coast and Senegal

There remained the question of cooperation between the Ivory Coast and Senegal without which the community would be still-born. This seems to have been the purpose of Pompidou's visit to Dakar in February 1971. <sup>12/</sup> It is likely that the French president took the opportunity to underline his fears of Nigeria's growing influence in the region and his own preference for a Francophone grouping, rather than one organised along the lines of the abortive Regional Group.

In Senghor, and among his circle of advisers in Dakar, he would have found a sympathetic audience. The two leaders had once been fellow students at the *Ecole Normale Supérieure*, in Paris, and Senghor had often

credited his conversion to socialism to the influence of the man who would later become de Gaulle's successor as President of France. They shared similar academic and literary tastes and a common interest in preserving the cultural heritage of *francophonie*. Poet, scholar and jurist, and 'liberal' in his political views, Senghor was undoubtedly closer in many respects to the new French President than he had ever been to de Gaulle, whom he revered, but who was nevertheless cast in a very different mould.

Whatever Pompidou's message to Senghor in February 1971, the latter was not slow to press his own case for increased French assistance to Senegal and her neighbours. Senghor explained that, given the severe and continuing drought, which had halved his own country's agricultural production, and given the changing patterns of international trade and their adverse effect on the economies of the region, he was more than ever convinced that Senegal's "future cannot be conceived other than in union with its neighbours and that France can play a very important role in helping to effect these *rapprochements*." <sup>13/</sup>

For Senghor then, the emphasis was still on cooperation within the region, beginning with his immediate neighbours. In particular he wanted assistance in financing important inter-state projects, mainly in connection with the Senegal and Gambia River development schemes. He was not yet altogether reconciled to Guinea's departure from the OERS and proposed, meanwhile, to revive the project for a federation with the Gambia, and to work for even better relations with Mali and, following

a dispute over their common river boundary, with Mauritania. <sup>14/</sup>  
 Visiting Nigeria in the course of the year, to receive an honorary degree, Senghor seemed keen to develop cooperation within the region, and across linguistic frontiers.

In our discussions the President of Senegal indicated his wish to improve the terms and conditions on which some nineteen African states were associated with the EEC. *Although Nigeria had not concluded* an agreement of association with the European Community, we nevertheless pledged our support for any initiative that would strengthen the position of African governments and provide a more equitable and more reliable return for the producers. At the conclusion of the talks we both agreed to the creation of a Joint Commission to promote trade between our two countries on a preferential basis.

Towards the end of 1971, however, there was a perceptible change, not so much in Senghor's views on regional organisation, as in his approach to the creation of a West African community and the delineation of its boundaries. And, on this issue, the immediate effect was to align Senegal with France and the Ivory Coast rather than with Nigeria. Indeed, the change seems to have coincided with a meeting between the Presidents of Senegal and the Ivory Coast at the end of the year.

Immediately after a state visit to Mali, in December 1971, <sup>15/</sup>  
 Senghor made an unprecedented journey to see Houphouët-Boigny, in Abidjan, ending decades of bitter rivalry between the two leaders and their respective states. <sup>16/</sup> The courtesy was returned by the Ivory Coast President,

who travelled to Dakar some two years later. <sup>17/</sup> It was significant, however, that the initiative for the meeting came from Senghor rather than from Houphouët-Boigny, although both leaders were under strong pressure from the French and neither was secure any longer within his own sub-region. Significant, too, that Senghor had worked hard just before the visit to minimise the extent of their recent differences, particularly in the matter of 'dialogue' with South Africa.

The Senegalese leader was still opposed to direct contacts with the South African government until it had formally renounced its apartheid doctrines - although, in March 1975, he did finally agree to meet the South African Prime Minister John Vorster, but in Abidjan rather than Dakar. Now, however, he insisted that there were other means available for changing South African policy without recourse to violence. And, to that end, he wanted an extraordinary meeting of OAU leaders, the following February, to explore the prospects and implications of 'dialogue'. <sup>18/</sup> The joint communiqué issued after the Abidjan meeting underlined the wish of both leaders to pursue "dialogue" and work together for a peaceful and "neutral" Africa. They also confirmed their opposition to "ideologies foreign to the continent". <sup>19/</sup>

This, in turn, reflected Senghor's distrust of the big powers, beginning with the Soviet Union, his belief in the cultural unity of black Africa, and his conviction that *Eurafrrique* offered the best hope for the future of the African states. It is doubtful if Houphouët-Boigny shared all of these views, although his opposition to Communism had been manifest since his break with the French Communist Party in 1950.

Nevertheless there was a growing alignment of their foreign policies even when these continued to reflect differences in the situation of the two countries. On economic issues there was broad agreement about the need for more cooperation on the part of the African and Francophone states if they were to achieve a greater measure of independence, and both leaders were critical of existing economic relations between their countries and the EEC.

In Abidjan Senghor also appears to have consented to some revision of his earlier views, which had favoured economic integration within the region and across linguistic boundaries. After 1971 he seems to have become partially reconciled with the views of France and of the Ivory Coast, who had a much narrower conception of the new community and its future role, and wished to confine it to the Francophone states.

In the formative stages of the CEAO Senghor was now prepared to restrict membership to the Francophone states of West Africa, even if he wanted, later, to extend its boundaries to encompass all of West and much of Central Africa and even to include an independent Angola. The two objectives were not, however, easily compatible. Where Senghor cited administrative and various economic differences between the English and French-speaking states as obstacles to the immediate creation of the broad West African community that we then advocated, he apparently had no such misgivings about his ambitious 'Atlantic' grouping of states, which was even more heterogeneous in terms of language, culture, history and institutions.

The Federal Military Government did recognise the many difficulties in the path of any future regional community, but it was our view that the sooner these were identified and tackled the better for all concerned. To postpone the question of economic integration or, worse still, to proceed with the creation of rival groupings, would serve only to increase the differences and to make a lasting and successful economic union that much more difficult to achieve.

Conversely, to attempt to span the length and breadth of the continent, or even its western half, without first securing a large measure of integration within our own region, seemed to us unlikely to advance either the cause of economic integration or the interests of the other regions involved. An African Common Market was a highly desirable but still remote goal which was better promoted by regional cooperation than by continental confusion. Senghor's expansive designs for future economic cooperation could only serve to forestall the creation of a West African grouping, with the participation of all the states within the region, and making the involvement of Nigeria and the other English-speaking states conditional on the inclusion of Zaire and most of Central Africa.

The Federal Military Government was able to express its misgivings about the direction taken by Senegalese policy on regional integration during Senghor's visit to Lagos, in November 1972. I again emphasised the urgent need for economic cooperation within Africa and, most appropriately at the regional level. In the absence of such cooperation neither *negritude* nor talk of cultural unity would suffice to give us equality with other parts of the world and ensure that Africa and Africans were treated with the respect they deserved.



Let our experts begin to examine the impediments that exist in our way of promoting meaningful economic cooperation between our two countries and the other states of West Africa. Let us work towards free movement of capital, labour, and goods throughout West Africa. In effect, and consistent with your life-long preoccupation, let us recapture the spirit of Monrovia of 1968 and work for the creation of West African Economic Community across linguistic barriers and free from colonial legacies.

20/

The joint conference between Senghor and Houphouët-Boigny resulted in sufficient agreement on preliminary matters to enable the two leaders to give their formal consent and blessing to the creation of the CEAO. Despite the domestic problems that both countries faced in the 'seventies, considerable pressure was obviously required to effect even this limited reconciliation. We have already discussed the intervention of France in the form of a series of personal tours by the new president, Georges Pompidou. Without Nigeria there would have been no need for and probably little likelihood of reconciliation.

Mali also made an independent and important contribution reflecting its continuing interest in a fusion of the two sub-regional blocs, the OERS and the Entente. Traditionally sympathetic to wider African groupings, Mali's policy was a direct response to geography and its pivotal situation in the western part of the region, coupled with the endless search for new markets and for alternative routes to the coast. In return, President Moussa Traoré had been appointed first Chairman of the CEAO.

The rapprochement between Senghor and his former rival was also accelerated by pressure from another and younger generation of Francophone leaders within the region, military rather than civilian, less receptive to more traditional appeals, less responsive to arguments couched in historical and cultural terms, less tolerant of external pressures, particularly from the French and the metropole, and visibly lacking in the customary deference accorded to the educated products of the *Ecole William Ponty*, in Dakar, and the Sorbonne.

The familiar, almost traditional leadership of Senegal and the Ivory Coast was at last being contested, not only within the wider framework of OCAM, but also within West Africa and particularly by the governments of the poorer, land-locked states. The growing stature of Hamani Diori, President of Niger, both as a regional and Francophone leader, and the more independent attitude displayed by Presidents Lamizana and Traoré, were evidence of increasing dissatisfaction among younger leaders with their more senior colleagues and growing impatience at their tedious and sterile quarrels.

Where the Central African states were the first to challenge West African predominance within the Francophone community, the Sahel states were no longer prepared to adopt a passive attitude with regard to their more prosperous coastal partners. However, it was not until Pompidou's death, in April 1974, and following Diori's removal that same month by a military coup, that the French, under Giscard d'Estaing, began to look in other directions and in other quarters for their African collaborators. <sup>21/</sup>

Despite continuing pressure from the French and from other European interests, it was not until June 3, 1972, following our own meetings with Francophone leaders in Lomé, that the preliminary agreement to set up the CEAO was finally signed, again at Bamako. The tenor of that conference was not, however, quite what the sponsors wanted or, indeed, anticipated. The new mood of independence among the Francophone leaders, and the economic hardship resulting from the drought in the Sahel, would help account for their evident reluctance to accept the recommendations of the elder statesmen who, for their part, could no longer conjure with the name of General de Gaulle.

In Bamako ... neither the Ministers nor the Heads of State could agree on a text for the Treaty. After many hours of deliberations, therefore, they signed only an 'agreement in principle' announcing the creation of the CEAO, to be ratified and finally signed in December 1972.

22/

#### The CEAO : a Regional or Francophone Community

One of the key issues threatening the talks in Bamako was the strong and vocal opposition to any union that would exclude the English-speaking countries or make rapprochement more difficult with countries outside the region, particularly in North Africa. Houphouët-Boigny was now as anxious to keep Nigeria out of the CEAO as he had been determined to exclude Ghana from the Entente, following Nkrumah's removal in February 1966.

Senghor was increasingly preoccupied with *Eurafrique* and with the forthcoming negotiations with the EEC - Yaoundé III - when he would act as spokesman for the nineteen associated African states. Although anxious to coordinate the views and positions of the different African leaders, he was, on the whole, less concerned with horizontal relations within Africa, than with cementing the unity between Africa and Europe.

When it seemed to Senghor that Nigeria's inclusion in the CEAO was unlikely to strengthen unity between the two continents and would undoubtedly antagonise both the French and the government of the Ivory Coast, he preferred to temporize. The new Treaty of the CEAO would not exclude other African states which might still be admitted by a vote of existing members. <sup>23/</sup> That, however, was unacceptable to Nigeria and the other English-speaking states who, excluded from the initial and decisive meetings, were being confronted with a *fait accompli*.

According to Senghor the problems experienced by the Francophone states, in reaching agreement on a successor to the UDEAO, showed the wisdom of restricting membership during the formative stages of the CEAO. <sup>24/</sup> And this then became the basis of the "by stages" formula, advocated by Houphouët-Boigny, accepted by Senghor, and finally adopted by the Francophone states, although *not* without considerable and heated debate.

#### Views of the Sahel States

Mali as the host state, was in a difficult position as it was that country's traditional policy to support African unity and to participate in any grouping that would contribute to such unity. Under Keita, Mali had been one of the three members of Nkrumah's Union of African States. This was still the official view at Bamako, in May 1970, when it was agreed that the CEAO should be open to all interested states. <sup>25/</sup>

By the end of 1971, however, Mali and Senegal had somewhat modified their views in an attempt to accommodate the French and the Ivory Coast, who wanted a purely Francophone community, at least in the initial phase. Thus President Traoré, himself, came to question the viability of a customs union between states with different languages and separate monetary arrangements.

By June 1972, Mali had come fully to accept the notion that a CEAO, limited to Francophone states, was but a first and preliminary stage in the construction of a more ambitious West African grouping. The following year Traoré insisted that:

Nigeria, which knows our real position, will not consider the creation of the CEAO as an affront and is aware that this is only a stage. 26/

Traoré was likewise aware of our view that the proliferation of rival economic groupings was not - at this or any other stage - in the interest of West African countries, least of all the poorest. But it is doubtful whether Mali had much choice in the matter.

Surrounded by former French or Francophone territories, Mali was attached to Senegal, by rail, and to the Ivory Coast by road - although more recently there had been efforts to connect Mali with the Algerian highway network. The riverine link towards Nigeria, which accounted for Mali's membership of the River Niger Commission, was much less important than the direct routes to the coast through Senegal and the Ivory Coast, particularly as the Niger flowed eastwards and was not navigable for its entire length. Again, the obvious market for Mali's beef production was in the adjoining coastal states or, via the coast, to France and Western Europe.

Mali had much to gain, then, from the rapprochement between Senegal and the Ivory Coast, and from the proposed, if limited fusion between countries of the Entente and Senegal River groupings - as was shown by her recent inclusion, alongside Upper Volta and Niger, in the Entente's Common Market for Meat and Livestock. Mali had received little benefit from the UDEAO, not only because of continuing rivalry between the Ivory Coast and Senegal, but also on account of the Ivory Coast's special relationship with her Entente partners, Upper Volta and Niger, which did not, of course, extend to Mali. Creation of the CEAO would, however, rectify that situation. As Traoré remarked in Paris, in April 1972:

It has always been Mali's wish that the two  
sub-regional groups should come together to form  
a West African Economic Community. 27/

#### Mauritania

Mauritania, while close to Mali and Senegal and a member of the Senegal River Organisation, had also applied for membership of the Maghreb Union and been accepted in 1972. President Ould Daddah therefore wanted recognition, from his Francophone partners, of his country's special status and vocation, as a 'bridge' between Black and Arab Africa. While anxious to keep one foot firmly planted in Black and West Africa, he was also determined that nothing in the composition or structure of the CEAO should prevent his country extending the same preferential treatment to its new North African allies.

In yet another display of national sovereignty, the president also hoped to revise his country's cooperation agreements with France, so as to have the right to an independent currency while remaining a member of the West African Monetary Union (UMOA) and enjoying the privileges and benefits of the Franc Zone - a request that the French and the UMOA subsequently rejected. <sup>28/</sup> Meanwhile Mauritania, although still attached to the principle of a broad-based regional community, was in no position to decline membership in the CEAO, which had strong support from the French and backing from Mauritania's powerful southern neighbour, Senegal.

#### Niger

Niger, on the other hand, had for several years been distancing itself from the Ivory Coast, its partner in the Entente, while demanding renegotiation of its cooperation agreements with France and better terms from the predominantly French interests involved in the extraction and marketing of uranium. <sup>29/</sup> At the same time Niger, like Mauritania and Mali, had also been developing links further North, with Algeria and Libya, which aroused further misgivings on the part of the Ivory Coast and the French. <sup>30/</sup>

Our country's relations with Niger had been extremely cordial since independence. As early as 1961 there had been talk of an economic union between the two states that might eventually lead to political integration. Both countries were represented on such bodies as the River Niger and Lake Chad Commissions and, in this and other ways, had demonstrated their commitment to the goal of economic integration within the region. After the civil war we had created a Joint Commission for Cooperation with Niger, to accelerate our mutual development. In January 1972 there was a further agreement, whereby Nigeria undertook to supply Niger with electricity from the Kainji Dam project.

Niger had no reason, therefore, to relax its ties with Nigeria and every interest in expanding trade and improving diplomatic and commercial relations. With the probability that Togo and Dahomey would wish to join with us in our proposed regional community, it was perhaps difficult to conceive of Niger doing otherwise, as her main access to the coast was either through Nigeria or Dahomey. Which might help to explain why, at Bamako, in June 1972, President Diori was described as "the chief protagonist of the anglophone cause". <sup>31/</sup> His determined opposition to Nigeria's exclusion from the CEAO even threatened to disrupt the proceedings.

It was only when a last minute compromise, signing an 'agreement in principle' was suggested, that President Diori agreed to maintain the appearance of unity. <sup>32/</sup>

However, while Niger could afford to take a more independent line than the other Sahel states, Diori was not prepared to risk a break with the Entente, whose leader, Houphouët-Boigny, had long been a close personal friend and political associate. Nor was he willing, apparently, to allow his relations with the French to deteriorate still further. The compromise formula devised in Bamako seems to have been designed, not only to maintain a façade of Francophone unity, but also to relieve at least some of the pressure on Diori, who was widely expected to support the Nigerian-Togolese initiative. My personal view was that Diori was also trying to influence the new grouping, as a whole, in the direction of the wider regional grouping.



As Diori later explained in an interview with *Fraternité Matin*, the Ivory Coast newspaper, in December 1972 : it "would not be realistic to build an economic community that ignored the anglophone countries." <sup>33/</sup> But already Niger was beginning to move a little closer to the Ivory Coast and Senegal, as Diori, himself, opted for safer ground : giving more cautious and qualified support for our entry and that of the other English-speaking states. The CEAO was to be an integrated community and not just a common market, and so the Francophone states would first have to ascertain "whether they [*i.e.* the English-speaking states] were interested in participating in such a community and if they really wanted to cooperate in the full sense of the term and not just to expand trade." <sup>34/</sup>

#### Upper Volta

The remaining Sahel state, Upper Volta, had already shown a considerable degree of independence in attending the Monrovia conference of the West African Regional Group, in 1968, despite the absence of the other Entente states - and in agreeing to host the abortive 1969 conference in the country's capital, Ouagadougou. Upper Volta was also one of the states most dependent for trade and communications on its African partners and most interested, therefore, in inter-state cooperation.

Where Mali now maintained that a customs union across linguistic lines, and with no previous experience of close cooperation, was unlikely to be viable, and where Niger contended that, without Nigeria, it would lack credibility, Upper Volta wanted anglophone participation with a view to developing closer links with Ghana and relieving its chronic dependency on the Ivory Coast.

Meanwhile Upper Volta needed the Ivory Coast as an outlet for its surplus labour and as a market for its rural produce; the Ivory Coast also provided not only transit for essential imports but the means with which to purchase them. This made it all but impossible for General Lamizana to persist, for any time, in a policy that did not have the approval of the Ivory Coast government. And as 'a Sahel state, seriously afflicted by drought since 1968, she was unable to remain outside any grouping, regional or sub-regional, that offered any prospect of external assistance or relief from extreme under-development.

#### The Coastal States : Dahomey

Of the other Entente states, Dahomey was moving towards an even closer accommodation with Ghana, on the one hand, and Nigeria on the other. The Nigerian connection was an old and valued one and a customs agreement had been signed by both countries as early as 1962. Our relations with the three-man Presidential Council of Dahomey, during 1971-2, were cordial and it was then that our governments negotiated the establishment of a common customs office, harmonisation of our postal services, and the inauguration of a direct telecommunication service between our two countries.

At the end of 1971 a trade agreement was signed providing 'most favoured nation' treatment for the products of our countries. The transit tax on goods passing between Dahomey and Nigeria was lifted, while we also worked for the removal of similar barriers to trade between Dahomey and Togo. By the end of 1972 we had completed the highway link between Lagos and Porto Novo and had offered the government of Dahomey a substantial, interest-free loan.

Although sympathetic to the Nigeria-Togo proposals for a West African economic community, Dahomey nevertheless initialled the preliminary agreement creating the CEAO in Bamako, in June 1972. However, by adhering to such a policy, Dahomey's leaders risked losing the substantial revenues and other advantages their country would have derived from increased trade in the sub-region, following the establishment of ECOWAS. Nigeria nevertheless continued to assist her western neighbour with a variety of joint projects that would eventually benefit both economies, including a sugar refinery and a cement industry.

The more radical military regime that came to power in Dahomey, in October 1972, under President Kérékou, was more outspoken in its views on regional unity and more critical of linguistic separatism.

Dahomey does not believe in a regroupment of African countries based exclusively on linguistic criteria. The separation between anglophones and francophones ceased to be relevant after independence. Why is it that, in Europe, Britain can be admitted to the EEC while Africans are expected to reject the entry of anglophone countries into the CEAO?

35/

Kérékou was soon reviving the idea of a Benin Union, comprising Nigeria, Togo, and his own country. Our interest, however, was in economic union at the regional level, rather than in the proliferation of sub-regional groupings, however useful these may have been in the past.

Here, too, the new government seemed much closer to the Nigerian position. A senior officer was able to quote, with approval, the comment in a Nigerian journal that : "to build the West African community without

Nigeria is to play Hamlet without the Prince." <sup>36/</sup> Thus, where Dahomey had initialled the preliminary agreement that created the CEAO, in Bamako, in June 1972, she was not a signatory of the Treaty that finally established the new Francophone community - in Abidjan, in April 1973. At the end of the proceedings her status at the meeting was defined by her representative as that of an observer rather than an active participant. <sup>37/</sup>

### Togo

Togo's support for the wider West African economic community was, as we have seen, a product of historical circumstance, economic interest, and a growing conviction on the part of its government that, without closer economic cooperation, the African states would experience neither development nor independence. Never a full member of the Francophone community, Togo had looked increasingly to Nigeria for possible protection - mainly against her neighbours. While relations with Ghana, once very strained, had improved considerably in 1966 with the removal of Nkrumah, those with Dahomey were almost invariably bad and their border was frequently closed.

It had long been the aim of successive governments, in both Togo and Dahomey, to boost trade and commerce within the sub-region, and in the context of a Benin Union. However, the mutual antipathy and chronic rivalry between the two countries was itself a major obstacle to the realisation of this objective. Nigeria had worked consistently to try to overcome these problems and one of the aims of our proposed regional community was to provide a more stable and secure environment wherein trade might expand and cooperation be developed to the advantage of each and every member state. Indeed, the benefits to be derived from membership

in the larger community would be more than sufficient to outweigh any narrow considerations of relative advantage.

On that point General Eyadema of Togo and the Federal Military Government were in close agreement. The Nigerian delegation that arrived in Lomé, in April 1972, at the invitation of the Togolese government, to help celebrate the tenth anniversary of the country's independence, was therefore both large and experienced. It was an indication both of the importance we attached to our joint deliberations with Togo, and of the determination of our two states to proceed with ECOWAS. And, as we have seen, a joint communiqué was signed at the end of our deliberations, firmly establishing the nucleus of our future regional community.

Eyadema's support for economic integration in West Africa was the more valuable as it was evidence of the ability of two states, who were not otherwise immediate neighbours, to cooperate across linguistic boundaries, notwithstanding the difference in their respective size and situation. Dahomey, whatever the current state of its relations with Togo, was now more likely to cooperate with us, as the alternative was comparative isolation and at least some disruption or interruption of her interstate trade. With the support of Togo and Dahomey there was every chance that Niger, too, would join with us, while Ghana's inclusion was also probable, particularly after the government of Dr. Kofi Busia was replaced by that of Colonel Ignatius Acheampong, in January 1972.

The Togolese President had had discussions with Acheampong while we were all present in Lomé for the independence celebrations. Togo and

the new military government in Ghana had agreed, in March 1973, to reopen their common border post, at Aflao, on a permanent twenty-four hour basis while, at the same meeting, both leaders formally approved the creation of a joint commission for cooperation. They also agreed to take steps to coordinate agricultural and industrial programmes, expand trade relations, promote educational contacts and establish road and telecommunication links. Such measures were adopted in the context of the 1972 Nigeria-Togo proposals and with a view to "facilitate the early setting up of a West African economic community." <sup>38/</sup>

With Togolese support, therefore, we could feel much more confident about the future of our incipient economic community. Meanwhile, the Joint Commission of Nigerian and Togolese ministers and officials had met, as scheduled, from the end of June until early July 1972, in Lagos, "with a view to submitting for the consideration of their two Governments proposals aimed at establishing between their two countries an Economic Community as a nucleus of an Economic Community embracing the whole of West Africa." <sup>39/</sup>

Dr. Adebayo Adedeji led the Nigerian delegation and M. Jean Tevi, that of Togo. In the opening session Dr. Adedeji was critical of the opponents of regional integration who were obsessed with what were essentially artificial barriers to further cooperation. The new community recognised no such barriers, and was open to all, but time was pressing and the creation of the community could not be delayed indefinitely. Meanwhile it was agreed that the Economic Community, "even though set in motion by Nigeria and Togo, will be guided by an open-door policy which will enable other sister countries in the West African /region/ to join." <sup>40/</sup>

And, on behalf of the two governments, I was invited to issue invitations to the remaining countries of the region to attend a summit meeting to be convened at the earliest possible opportunity. It would be preceded by a conference of relevant Ministers, to be held on or before November 1972. In fact, given the large amount of preliminary work to be completed, the first summit did not take place until December 1973 in Lomé.

At the same time the Nigerian and Togolese delegations agreed "to adopt a pragmatic approach in the pursuit of limited objectives capable of easy realisation and expressed their determination to succeed in such objectives." <sup>41/</sup> Confidence, it was believed, would grow with each success, increasing still further the prospects of economic cooperation. It was also agreed that officials of the two countries should meet as and when necessary:

To produce working papers incorporating the broad areas of cooperation : namely - improvement of transport, telecommunications and other links, trade liberalisation, industrial harmonisation, institution of suitable payments arrangements and facilitation of movement of factors of production between them.

42/

President Eyadema had already advised me of the forthcoming meeting of the CEAO, in Bamako, in June 1972, and of Togo's intention to be present but only as an observer. Hence it came as no surprise to us, in Nigeria, when the Togolese delegate declined to sign the preliminary agreement at the end of those proceedings.

Guinea

Guinea was the one Francophone state in West Africa that was not invited to Bamako for the meeting of the CEAO in June 1972. Guinea's relations with Senegal and the Ivory Coast had deteriorated sharply following the Portuguese-mounted invasion of Conakry, the country's capital. In November 1970, Guinea had severed diplomatic relations with Senegal in April 1971 and had helped precipitate the collapse in December of the Senegal River Organisation (OERS) by boycotting its proceedings throughout the year.

Senghor, for his part, seemed increasingly reconciled to a smaller sub-regional body, without Guinea, and with more modest objectives. He was unlikely, therefore, to press hard for Guinea's membership of the CEAO. Nor did there seem much prospect of an early reconciliation between Guinea and the Ivory Coast. After the Bamako Conference, Houphouët-Boigny did agree to a meeting with Sékou Touré, apparently at the invitation of the Guinean leader. But that was at the end of July 1972, and any hope of a new and lasting accommodation between the two leaders was short-lived.

In any case Touré was not likely to be sympathetic to an organisation sponsored by his Francophone opponents, which enjoyed the active support of the former colonial power, and was calculated to reinforce the linguistic divide in West Africa. He had worked consistently for greater African unity and for closer cooperation at every level. It was his ambition to secure a real independence, both political and economic for the African states.



Hence his country's support for Nigeria during the civil war, which we were shortly afterwards to reciprocate, by condemning the attempted invasion of Guinea, in November 1970, and by offering such practical assistance as we could then provide. On these issues there was sufficient unity of purpose and identity of outlook to cement a firm alliance between our respective countries.

Early in 1972 Guinea and Nigeria had concluded agreements on economic, scientific and technical cooperation. We had also formed a joint ministerial commission, to meet each year to discuss matters of mutual interest. When I visited Guinea in March 1972, Touré confirmed his continuing support for economic unity within the region and his opposition to the arbitrary linguistic boundaries derived from colonial rule.

It is ridiculous to describe an African country as Francophone or Anglophone, when barely thirty per cent of the people of these states understand French or English ... We must remain faithful to ourselves. 43/

Later that year, when Nigeria acted as intermediary during the protracted negotiations for the removal of Nkrumah's body from Guinea and its return to Ghana, Touré had written to me proposing a federation of truly independent African states which was to include many of Guinea's economic partners, i.e. Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Nigeria, Cameroon and Zaire. While we welcomed this indication of Guinea's willingness to draw closer to ourselves and the other African states, whether French, English or Arab speaking, our

first and most immediate concern, was still with West African economic union.

Here, I took the opportunity of my meetings with Touré to suggest that successful cooperation pre-supposed the peaceful resolution of existing disputes within the region, particularly those involving neighbouring states. Whether as a result of these promptings, or perhaps in response to some other, independent initiative, the Presidents of Guinea and the Ivory Coast announced a reunion scheduled for the end of July 1972 - their first such encounter since 1964. And, significantly, it was Houphouët-Boigny who went to Guinea, and to Touré's home town of Faranah, for what was described in advance as a meeting of reconciliation. <sup>44/</sup> -

It may well be that Touré was again anxious to improve relations with France and with his Francophone neighbours, after the upheavals at the end of 1970; it is also possible that Houphouët-Boigny was now ready for some kind of accommodation with his former ally in the African Democratic Rally (RDA). It is possible, too, but much less likely, that he envisaged the entry of Guinea into the CEAO, or perhaps some less formal arrangement associating Guinea with the Entente, similar to that concluded with Mali in 1970.

The meeting began well as Houphouët-Boigny, arriving in Guinea, announced that their two states were "compelled (*condamnés*) by circumstances to work together in pursuit of the same objectives" - "despite certain previous differences" and "notwithstanding our various commitments and

distinctive options".<sup>45/</sup> Touré, himself, had spoken warmly, if guardedly of the "Common will" and "common awareness" of their two peoples, "obliged (*condamnés*) by God and Environment to live together, as neighbours, struggling for the same cause - that of dignity and self-respect."<sup>46/</sup> Despite this auspicious opening, however, the meeting ended not in rapprochement but in a prompt resumption of verbal hostilities, as Touré once again accused the Ivory Coast of complicity in the 1970 invasion of Conakry.

The next attempt at reconciliation with Guinea came neither from Senghor, nor from Houphouët-Boigny, but from President Pompidou, himself, who in November 1972 publicly regretted "the administrative misunderstanding" that had led to the break between Guinea and the Metropole in 1958.<sup>48/</sup> France now seemed ready to come to terms with Guinea even if that country's neighbours were more cautious, less confident of the prospects for co-existence, or just reluctant to share their few remaining privileges with another partner.

But there was to be no final or effective reconciliation in this part of the region until after Guinea-Bissau became independent, in 1974, when the government of Sékou Touré could at least feel secure from external aggression. Without such a sense of security it was clear that the potential for economic cooperation within the region could not be fully realised. At the same time there was also a growing conviction within the area that a regional economic community could usefully be undertaken to guarantee the security of its members, to provide for their common defence and to safeguard their present and future independence. Accordingly, when the authorities in Guinea had cause to fear yet another invasion by mercenary troops, early in 1974, the Federal Military Government gave limited military assistance

under the terms of the OAU Charter as an indication of our firm and continuing commitment to the principle of regional security.

#### Establishment of the CEAO

The question of membership and the exclusive nature of the CEAO as a Francophone community were not the only issues confronting the leaders in Bamako in June 1972. Other tensions were already apparent despite the limited size and restricted composition of the new sub-regional grouping.

The states of the Sahel were concerned lest the CEAO should simply provide new incentives for economic growth in the coastal states largely at their expense. Even the institution of a Common Development Fund might do little more than temper the injustice of fiscal arrangements that would otherwise favour states with an industrial base.

In their opinion, the same malaise which plagues Africa's relations with the EEC would perpetuate itself in the CEAO - with the rich getting richer under a protectionist regime and the poor getting poorer despite some handouts from the Common Development Fund for their development.

49/

It was mainly a question of the goods to be taxed, the way the tax was to be levied and the distribution of the resulting revenue among the member states. Further consideration of this and other controversial matters, including the text of the Treaty and the various protocols - community budget, fishing agreement, meat and cattle community - were postponed until the end of the year to give member-countries the opportunity

to submit amendments to the published proposals. But, such were the outstanding differences that it was April 1973 before the Council of Ministers of the CEAO was able to meet in Abidjan to review the final treaty, which was then approved and signed by the Heads of State. <sup>50/</sup>

Prior to the 1973 summit, the sponsors of the CEAO, the Ivory Coast and Senegal, were themselves growing impatient at the delay in setting up the new structures. There were reports that the CEAO might be constituted with only four members, the core states, the Ivory Coast and Senegal, together with Mali and Upper Volta. This was now seen in some quarters as additional pressure on Hamani Diori to secure the inclusion of Niger, in the new community, and to ensure acceptance in the Sahel States of the proposed arrangements. <sup>51/</sup> Indeed, the future of the CEAO was very much in Diori's hands as he was the most senior and experienced of the leaders of the land-locked states. He also had the best bargaining position, having access to Nigerian markets and Nigerian ports, while Upper Volta and Mali were heavily dependent on trade and communication links with the richer Francophone states of the coast.

Diori's election as Chairman of the CEAO, at Abidjan in 1973, after Toure<sup>1</sup> had declined to continue in that position, was an astute move intended not only to confirm Niger's place within the community and to ensure acceptance of the protocols by the other land-locked states, but was also presented as a token of appeasement towards Nigeria and the other English-speaking states. <sup>52/</sup> Thus, if Diori finally came to accept the notion that the community, in its initial stage, should comprise only

Francophone states, it was with evident reluctance, and only after the other members had themselves acknowledged the urgent need for broader forms of economic cooperation, encompassing the region as a whole.

At this stage it was necessary first to consolidate what we already have, we who share the same monetary system, language and culture, and then move on to achieve more cohesion in this part of Africa. 53/

In his relations with Nigeria, Diori continued to insist that his objective was the prompt integration of the other West African states into an expanded regional community, which could be accomplished more smoothly once the Francophone states had resolved their own differences and had laid a solid basis for future cooperation. In Abidjan he also appealed to the other Sahel leaders in the earnest hope that "understanding and solidarity within the organisation will be maintained, in particular between the coastal countries and the less favoured states of the interior." 54<sup>1</sup>

Where Niger's leader was ready to make certain concessions to Francophone sentiment, the younger, military leaders of Togo, and Dahomey were not. As we have seen President Eyadema of Togo was co-sponsor of ECOWAS, while Togo continued to be represented at meetings of the CEAO only as an observer. The new military regime in Dahomey, after 1972, had already indicated its wish to pursue a more independent line than its predecessor and did not consider itself bound by the previous government's decisions, including its support for the CEAO.

Major Alladaye, largely responsible at the time for the country's foreign policy, was reported as saying, in April 1973:

So far, I have failed to discover what good Dahomey has derived from membership in OCAM and other such groupings. At the same time, our relations with Nigeria are based on concrete and pragmatic mutual interests. I am going to the CEAO summit with a view to examining what is there for my country in this organisation, but we shall not be bound by sentimental ties, left-overs from colonial days.

55/

In the event, Dahomey sponsored an amendment to the proposed Treaty providing for the admission of other states to the CEAO by majority vote, rather than by unanimous decision. This was rejected, although another amendment by the Ivory Coast, restricting future membership to West African states, was carried.<sup>56/</sup> At the end of the summit Dahomey announced its decision to reduce its participation in the community to that of an observer since, as Alladaye maintained:

Language is only language. I may speak French and the Nigerians may speak English, but this is merely a technical problem. What matters is that I feel that Cotonou is nearer to Lagos than to Dakar. We ought to leave our options open to an all-azimuth cooperation.

57/

The CEAO treaty was finally signed on April 18, but by only six states, three of whom were members of the Entente while the other three belonged to the Senegal River Organisation.<sup>58/</sup> Their combined population was less than thirty million, compared with a potential membership of at least

TABLE 5

## MEMBERSHIP OF MAIN WEST AFRICAN GROUPINGS

Organisation/ Grouping	Economic Community of West African States	Communauté Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest	Conseil de l'Entente	Union Monétaire Ouest Africaine	Organization pour la Mise-en- Valeur du Fleuve Senegal	Lake Chad Basin Commission	Niger River Commission	Mano River Union	Nigeria and the World
Country									
* Cameroun	X					X	X		
* Chad	X		X	X		X	X		
Dahomey (Benin)	X								
The Gambia	X						X		
Ghana	X								
Guinea	X								
Guinea Bissau	X			X					
Ivory Coast	X	X	X						
Liberia	X							X	
Mali	X	X			X		X		
Mauritania	X	X				X	X		
Niger	X	X	X	X					
Nigeria	X				X				
Senegal	X	X		X					
Sierra Leone	X							X	
Togo	X		X	X					
Upper Volta	X	X	X	X				X	
Cape Verde	X								

Source:

The Times, London, 30 June 1975.

Updated by Authof 1982

Note:

\* Non ECOWAS countries.



one hundred and fifty million for a wider West African Community. The annual volume of trade among the CEAO states amount to only \$5-6 million, including \$3 million in bilateral trade between the Ivory Coast and Senegal. (Table 5).

All revenues during the first five years of the organisation would, according to Houphouët-Boigny, be distributed among the poorer states : but as the revenues themselves were small, the benefits were likely to be equally restricted. <sup>59/</sup> Such was their financial predicament, however, that the land-locked states had little alternative but to join the CEAO with the satisfaction, at least, that membership in this, as in other organisations, was not incompatible with future membership in a genuine regional community. <sup>60/</sup>

## REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

1. Le Monde, 27 January 1972.
2. Le Monde, 22 May 1970.
3. There is an account of Algeria's more active policy towards black Africa by Andre Fontaine, Trois Visages de l'Afrique Atlantique, in Le Monde, 9 March 1973.
4. Le Monde, 17 April 1971.
5. Le Monde, 6 June 1972.
6. Le Monde, 12-13 January 1975. In an interview with Dr. Tamar Golan, in Dakar, in April 1975, President Senghor was reported to have said: "You must have noticed that Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Zaire and the Congo are in the same latitudes as Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya. Those countries are considered part of East Africa. Is it not then logical that the countries on the other side of the continent facing the Atlantic should be considered part of West Africa? Yet some of these are joining in East African groupings." The outcome of the Lagos negotiations should be a "grouping of all states on the Western side of Africa facing the Atlantic." West Africa, 26 May 1975.
7. Le Monde, 23 May 1970.
8. Tamar Golan, 'The Abidjan Six : 1', West Africa, 7 May 1973. "Advisors of the 'old school', such as M.David, an expert in customs and duties, who has been active in Francophone Africa since 1947, sincerely believe that cooperation across colonially established boundaries is impossible 'for at least a decade if not a generation', as he told me." Ibid. M.Jean-Francois Deniau, EEC Commissioner in Brussels and later French Secretary of State for Cooperation, was also present at the Bamako Summit of the CEAO in June 1972, and at the next Summit in Abidjan, in April 1973. Le Monde, 6 June 1972, West Africa, 7 May 1973. On EEC financial support for the CEAO, see O.J.B.Ojo, 'Nigeria and the Formation of ECOWAS', International Organisation, 34 (4) Autumn 1980, p.396.
9. West Africa, 7 May 1973.
10. Ibid.
11. The extent of the disagreements at the Bamako Summit was discussed much later in Le Monde, 10 April 1973.
12. Le Monde, 5 February 1971.
13. Ibid.
14. Le Monde, 6 February 1971; 19 November 1971; 11 January 1972.
15. Le Monde, 19 November 1971.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont.

16. Le Monde, 17 December 1971.
17. Le Monde, 19 December 1973.
18. Le Monde, 19 November 1971.
19. Le Monde, 17 December 1971.
20. Quoted by Ojo, op.cit., from Nigeria : Bulletin on Foreign Affairs, 2 (1 and 2), April - December 1972, pp.70-74.
21. The most obvious indication of change was the removal of M.Jacques Foccart as Secretary-General for African and Malagasy Affairs at the Elysee. One writer in West Africa noted that "M.Giscard d'Estaing himself, in any case, seems certain to adopt a quite different attitude to former French colonies in Africa from that of his two predecessors. He lacks the paternal standing of the General and the close personal relations with African leaders of M.Pompidou. He is considerably younger than, for example, M.Houphouët-Boigny, who can claim seniority over him even as a Minister in Paris. He comes to office at a time when France's relations with Africa are undergoing considerable modifications, even though his re-establishment of the Ministry of Cooperation may suggest that he wishes to strengthen and expand these relations. Its disappearance last February was regretted by African leaders. French ministers had supposed that this evidence that African countries were to have the same relationship with Paris as others would be welcome; but African leaders suspected that it only meant that there would be less French aid." West Africa, 10 June 1974.
22. Tamar Golan, 'The Abidjan Six : 2', West Africa, 14 May 1973. This article also gives a fairly detailed account of the differences that surfaced among "the Six" at Bamako, that delayed the effective establishment of the CEAO and were a cause of some concern for the leaders of Senegal and the Ivory Coast.
23. As late as May 1975 the CEAO conveyed an invitation to the other West African countries to join their organisation, following their recent Summit at Niamey - and before the Lagos Conference that would agree to establish the Economic Community of West Africa States. West Africa, 5 May 1975.
24. Tamar Golan, West Africa, 14 May 1973.
25. Le Monde, 23 May 1970.
26. West Africa, 14 May 1973.
27. Le Monde, 30 April - 2 May 1972.
28. Le Monde, 7 December 1972. (Mauritania wants own currency and to control its credit policy); 6 February 1973 suspends talks with France, leaves Franc zone and rejects military agreements with the former metropole). Mauritania applied to join the Maghreb Union, in July 1973 entered the Arab League in January 1974, and later nationalised MIFERMA, the international corporation responsible for the extraction of iron ore within the country. Le Monde, 4 December, 1974.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont

29. Le Monde, 5 October 1972.
30. Le Monde, 7 March 1973; 10 April 1973; 17 April 1973; 18 April 1973.
31. West Africa, 14 May 1973.
32. Ibid.
33. Quoted in Le Monde, 8 December 1972.
34. Ibid. The previous month Diori had spoken of "the ties, henceforth indissoluble, that history has woven, for better or worse, between Niger and France." Le Monde, 25 November 1972.
35. Le Monde, 26 July 1973.
36. Ibid.
37. West Africa, 14 May 1973.
38. West Africa, 24 September 1973.
39. Joint Communiqué, Meeting between Nigerian and Togolese Ministers and Officials, June 29-July 3, 1972.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Le Monde, 22 March 1972.
44. Le Monde, 26 July 1972.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Le Monde, 27 July 1972.
48. Le Monde, 26-27 November 1972.
49. West Africa, 14 May 1973.
50. Ibid.
51. Le Monde, 10 April 1973.
52. West Africa, 14 May 1973.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont

55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.
58. Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Niger (Entente); Senegal, Mauritania, Mali (Senegal River Organisation).
59. West Africa, 14 May 1973.
60. "The Treaty signed in Abidjan on April 18 is, then, a well prepared working document which, one hopes may serve at a later stage, as a basis for a wider and more effective regional economic union."  
Tamar Golan, West Africa, 14 May 1973.

CHAPTER 9ESTABLISHMENT OF ECOWAS JULY 1973-MAY 1975Preparatory Meetings : Lomé (1973), Accra (1974), Monrovia (1975)

The establishment of the CEAO, during 1972-3, made it even more imperative, in our view, to try to hasten the formation of the wider regional body, rather than risk the permanent division of West Africa into two mutually exclusive economic zones. Experience already suggested that sub-regional organisations, like the CEAO, however useful in the short term, or in a very limited capacity, could not begin to compare in efficiency or results with a grouping whose terms of reference would encompass the region as a whole.

We, in Nigeria, therefore preferred to view the CEAO, not so much as a rival to ECOWAS, still less as a viable alternative to our regional community, but rather as another manifestation of the desire for increased cooperation so evident within the region after 1970. As J.P. Renninger has pointed out, of the thirty sub-regional organisations listed as active in West Africa during the 'seventies, no less than eighteen, including the CEAO, were formed after 1970.<sup>1/</sup> Economic hardship had brought home to governments the substantial benefits to be derived from mutual association, while the relaxation of former colonial ties made it possible, at last, to envisage a growing economic and cultural exchange across monetary and linguistic frontiers.

On the political front, however, it was essential that West African governments, and their leaders, should continue to focus their energies and attention on the wider entity, and that the drive towards economic cooperation in the region should be sustained. Thus, in keeping with the decision taken in Lagos, in June-July 1972, at the meeting of ministers and experts from Togo and Nigeria, officials of the two countries were active during the next twelve months preparing working papers on various aspects of ECOWAS and its proposed role and structures, in the expectation that these would later serve as a basis for further discussion by all the governments concerned.

It was then my task to try to arrange a conference of Ministers from all the West African states when our joint proposals could be more fully considered and conclusions could be drawn. To this end, in July and August 1973, a joint Togo-Nigeria ministerial delegation toured all states in the region, other than Guinea-Bissau which was not yet independent, to deliver copies of the working papers and to consider comments and proposals therefrom. Meanwhile, in a letter to West African Heads of State on 11th July 1973, introducing the delegation, I invited them "to become foundation members" of the new community.

We have had the opportunity to discuss, on a number of occasions, the need for us in this region of Africa, the West African Region, to coordinate our efforts, not only at the political level but more so, to organise ourselves into a viable economic region cutting across linguistic, financial or any other barriers.

Our joint recommendations were only preliminary and thus constituted "a progress report". It had been our intention, from the outset, to ensure that each and every government in the region would participate fully in every phase of the development of the community and in all important decisions affecting its future. ECOWAS could not then become the exclusive property of any one state or group of states, nor would there be different categories of membership.

... it was agreed that all the fourteen countries in the West African sub-region would be invited to become foundation members, and that Nigeria and Togo would serve only as a preparatory Committee to produce working documents on the proposed Community for further consideration by the appropriate Ministers of the countries in the /region/.

The letter despatched to the six Heads of the CEAO states contained an additional paragraph, acknowledging the creation of their own new community, but at the same time pointing out the advantages of a continuing dialogue among all states to secure further economic cooperation within the region.

Our two governments are not unaware of the recent creation of CEAO, an organisation of which your Government is an honoured member. We appreciate the lofty ideals that inspired its establishment and fully understand your genuine intentions. Our two governments, nonetheless, believe that an opportunity for the exchange of ideas and information between us and your Government on intra-African economic cooperation will prove both fruitful and highly rewarding to all of us. It is in this spirit that our two Governments considered it necessary to send a joint Togo-Nigeria Ministerial delegation to hold discussions with your Government. It is my fervent hope that it will receive your blessings.



The initial response to the letter was encouraging : not least the replies I received from leaders of the two states that had long been identified with unitary aspirations, Ghana and Guinea. <sup>4/</sup> Colonel Acheampong of Ghana testified to the new mood of cooperation within our own sub-region and his own country's continuing support for the regional economic community.

In our discussions with President Eyadema earlier this year, and with President Kérékou last week, we stressed the need for the West African Economic Community and agreed that any meaningful economic grouping in West Africa should embrace all countries of the Region. We were proposing to follow up the meeting with President Kérékou last week with another attended by the four Heads of State of Nigeria, Dahomey, Togo and Ghana.

President Touré was eloquent in his support for the proposed community:

We should say unequivocally at once that whenever we are presented with such a project the Guinean response is invariably that she is ready to associate with African states to build a new Africa because our people have decided to make history rather than just continue to submit to it.

He cited the recent establishment of the Mifergui-Nimba venture, to exploit Guinea's extensive and still largely untapped iron ore reserves, with joint investment "by Algeria, Liberia, Nigeria, Guinea and other foreign partners", as proving "that we can harmonise our efforts and develop our resources - and it is Africa which always gains in the process." Guinea would therefore "participate largely" in the proposed West African summit and was "ready to go as far as possible and as far as our partners will allow us."

The outcome of our joint efforts with Togo was a Ministerial meeting in Lome, in December 1973, where all countries in the region were represented, including Guinea-Bissau, and whose purpose was to examine the principles for the evolution of ECOWAS as set out in the preliminary documents. President Eyadema opened the meeting with a speech stressing "the need for regional cooperation as a first step towards continental unity", thereby acknowledging the identity between our objectives and those long since approved and recommended by the OAU. 5/

Perhaps with the Francophone ministers particularly in mind, who had often expressed reservations about this kind of exercise in the past, the Togolese President went on to emphasise that he, himself, had no illusions about the nature and extent of the difficulties that lay ahead.

'The realisation of the West African Economic Community was dogged by serious problems including those relating to the diversity of languages, the disparity of currencies and the different levels of economic and social development...

But "these obstacles could be overcome, given a guiding political will and the determination to move ahead and make progress."

And there was considerable progress at Lomé, where the conference ended with general agreement about the institutions that the future community would require, together with suggestions about possible areas of cooperation and the form that cooperation might take. From the start there had been considerable interest in the reaction of the ministers

from the CEAO states, whose presence at Lomé was itself an advance on Monrovia in 1968. The success of the conference seemed further assured when the Mauritanian delegate, acting in some sense as their spokesman, raised no objection to the idea of a regional economic community which indeed he warmly supported in principle.

He seemed mainly concerned lest the activities of ECOWAS might encroach on the operations of existing sub-regional bodies and therefore called for the creation of an all-embracing and outward-looking community of states. <sup>6/</sup> This was in no way inconsistent with our own objective as Nigeria was itself a member of several such groupings and had no wish to preclude other states from making similar arrangements - provided, of course, that the goals of the sub-regional organisation were compatible with those of the wider West African community. Nevertheless, we made no secret of our hope and our conviction that, before very long, ECOWAS with its many advantages would come to absorb most, if not all the functions and responsibilities of the smaller bodies. (Table 5)

At the close of proceedings in Lomé, Nigeria and Togo were invited to prepare a draft treaty for ECOWAS which would then be considered at a further meeting of experts from the fifteen countries, to be held in Accra, Ghana, in January 1974. There would then be a second meeting of ministers in Niamey, Niger, in March 1974, to examine and pronounce on the results of the Accra deliberations, after which the final treaty could be ratified at a regional summit in Lagos.

Back in Lagos, after the conference, there seemed to be every justification for the enthusiasm of our Federal Commissioner for Economic

Development and Reconstruction, Dr. Adedeji, who described the Lomé meeting "as a positive success", whose achievements included "the acceptance of a pragmatic approach to the problem of economic cooperation in the sub-region and the drawing up of a working timetable."

Contrary to speculative reports, member states agreed that neither the existing economic groupings nor the differences in language and level of development was a barrier to the establishment of an effective community embracing the countries of West Africa. In this regard he cited the European Economic Community within which there were many countries and other economic groupings...

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At further meetings of Togolese and Nigerian officials, in December 1973 and January 1974, in Lagos and Lomé respectively, a draft treaty for ECOWAS was prepared - with advice and assistance from the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). From 11-15 February, 1974, a little later than expected, economic experts and officials from ten of the fifteen countries in the region assembled in Accra, with representatives of the ECA, to examine the draft treaty and formulate their recommendations for the second meeting of Ministers. The Accra meeting therefore took place in the absence of five of the six CEAO members, while the sixth, Mali, attended only on the last day.

The CEAO members had already asked for and been given a postponement of the meeting to give them sufficient time to study the new Nigerian-Togolese proposals. When the Ivory Coast asked for a further postponement, citing other commitments and the need for the CEAO members to meet first to consider their joint approach to the proposed community and the draft treaty, "Ghana, in consultation with the Nigerian and Togolese Heads of Missions in Accra, and with the approval of both General Eyadema and myself, decided to convene the meeting which finally took place in

February 1974." <sup>8/</sup> Failure to convene the meeting would have entailed considerable loss of face on the part of the sponsors and, even worse, would have cast considerable doubt on the seriousness of our enterprise.

The events were well summarised by a senior Nigerian official in the Federal Ministry of Economic Development and Reconstruction.

At the Accra meeting only nine out of the fifteen countries were represented on the first day when all the CEAO countries were absent. Mali, albeit, showed up on the last day. Before the Accra meeting, the Ivory Coast had asked for its postponement because the CEAO countries had already scheduled another meeting for 25th of January where a decision was expected to be taken on their attitude towards the ECOWAS project. After consultations by the Ghana Government with the Nigerian High Commissioner and the Togolese Ambassador in Accra, it was decided that the meeting should be held since it had been postponed once, otherwise, people would begin to doubt the seriousness of the new <sup>9/</sup> proponents of the Community idea.

Niger's absence from Accra was particularly unfortunate as it seemed to threaten the time-table previously agreed at Lomé by ministers representing all the West African states, including members of the CEAO. Those same ministers were now due to reconvene in the Niger capital, Niamey, in March to consider the draft treaty of ECOWAS along with the recommendations made by the experts in Accra. By the end of the first week of March, however, the authorities in Accra had still received no reply from President Diouri to their request that Niger should convene the second meeting of West African ministers. <sup>10/</sup>

Ghana then proposed that Guinea should be invited to host the conference should Niger decline to do so. My own strong preference

at the time was that, if at all possible, Niger should be persuaded to host the conference. Given the strong pressure by the French to dissuade the Francophone states from embracing ECOWAS and the sentiment underlying it, I felt that Niger was the most appropriate venue for such a crucial ministerial meeting.

I was well aware of Diori's views and convictions regarding a regional grouping of West African states across linguistic frontiers and believed that, as current chairman of the CEAO, he was particularly well placed to influence other CEAO members by his example. General Eyadema was in full agreement with me on this matter and approved my subsequent approach to Diori who, despite the many and conflicting pressures on him, finally consented to host the conference. Niger's ambassador in Lagos subsequently called on Dr. Adedeji and assured him that Niamey would sponsor the meeting, scheduled originally for March, but deferred until April 25-30, and now postponed until May. <sup>11/</sup> As Diori was Chairman of the CEAO it seemed reasonable therefore to assume that all the members of that body would be represented at the ministerial conference.

Then, on April 15, President Diori was overthrown by Colonel Seyni Kountché, following a *coup d'état* in Niger. Our relations with our northern neighbour became somewhat strained as a result, particularly in view of the close personal relationship that had existed between myself and Diori. Indeed, the sudden and unexpected removal of such a key and widely respected political figure in West African politics, and at this critical stage in the formation of ECOWAS, seemed even to threaten the future of the organisation.

Nevertheless, it was not our policy to interfere in the domestic affairs of member African states. Accordingly, we accepted the change in Niamey and consented to work with the new leadership there in the interests of West Africa as a whole. We recognised and made allowance for the problems stemming from the change and acceded to Kountche's request for a respite in which to reorganise the government and return his country to a normal, stable existence.

Until July 10 there was considerable uncertainty about the intentions of the new Niger Government regarding the Niamey meeting of ministers. Reluctant to embarrass the leadership in Niger by holding them to the earlier commitment to stage the conference, we discussed with Ghana and Togo the possibility of approaching Mali to see if we could secure Bamako as an alternative venue. After all, Mali had been the one CEAO state to send a delegation to the Accra meeting, and Traoré had several times expressed his country's support for regional economic integration. On the other hand we also felt that we should still give Niger and the new rulers the chance to fulfil their obligation. In this way we hoped to ensure that Niger and its government remained fully committed to ECOWAS. Above all we were anxious that nothing should be done to alienate or antagonise our northern neighbour.

In the end it was decided that, before communicating with the Mali Government, a joint delegation of Nigeria, Togo and Ghana would approach Kountché, or his representative, at the Mogadishu Summit of the OAU, to ascertain whether or not his country would host the forthcoming conference. 12/

The problems arising from the coup in Niger are well conveyed by the following official account of subsequent discussions.

Reports received about the same time suggested that the new Regime /i.e. in Niger/ was anxious to host the Ministerial meeting and that the new Head of State had issued appropriate instructions. This would appear to have been confirmed in discussions between the Nigerian, Togolese and Niger delegations in Mogadishu. Consequently a message was despatched to Niamey asking the Nigerian Embassy to seek confirmation that the new government of Niger was willing to convene the meeting from 30th July to 3rd August, 1974. 13/

It was only on July 10 that the Nigerian Embassy in Niamey advised us that Niger had formally indicated it was unable to host the meeting and had instead approached the Togolese Government asking it to act for a second time as host to the West African ministers. As we were all determined to spread the responsibilities for ECOWAS, however, Togo declined and instead approached the Malian authorities to inquire whether Bamako would provide facilities for the conference.

On August 2, 1974, I then addressed a message to Colonel Moussa Traoré, the Mali leader, through Dr. Adedeji, inviting him to host the meeting. 14/ Although agreeable in principle, Traoré had his own domestic problems, both political and economic, not the least of which were the consequences of the protracted drought in the Sahel zone. On reflection Mali was finally unable - if not altogether unwilling - to oblige and, rather than risk another protracted lull in proceedings and the prospect that our movement might, before long, begin to lose its momentum, I addressed an appeal to President Tolbert of Liberia, who was known to share his predecessor's strong commitment to regional integration.



We had almost exhausted the number of possible sites for the conference. Togo had sponsored the Lomé meeting and Nigeria hoped to host the final summit. Accra had already provided facilities for the meeting of constitutional experts in February. Of the Francophone states Guinea was undoubtedly willing but would not, unfortunately, have been acceptable to some at least of its French-speaking neighbours. The Sahelian countries were sympathetic but were understandably reluctant to assume additional administrative and financial burdens at a time of severe drought and given the sensitive state of their relations with France and their CEAO partners. Senegal seemed to be excluded because of that country's known stand on ECOWAS at this stage, while we were doubtful whether the Ivory Coast would wish to dissociate itself so far from Senegal as to provide the venue for an important ECOWAS meeting. Other than Liberia there was only Sierra Leone, the neighbouring state of Benin or The Gambia. Much therefore depended on the reply from President Tolbert. My letter was couched in friendly and respectful terms indicating our recognition of Liberia's total commitment to ECOWAS and our appreciation of its valuable contribution to regional integration, both in the past and, more particularly in the recent Lomé and Accra meetings. The relevant parts of the letter read as follows:

As Your Excellency is aware, our two countries have been collaborating with other countries in West Africa in the drive towards the establishment of an Economic Community in West Africa with the aim of consolidating our independence, accelerating the economic and social development of our various countries and increasing the friendly and mutually beneficial contact between our people.

To this end, our respective Ministers responsible for economic co-operation met in Lome, Togo, last December to consider the basic document drawn up jointly by the officials of Nigeria and Togo. Your country's delegation made positive, useful and noteworthy contributions to the success of that memorable meeting which drew up a time-table for the evolution of the Community, the final stage of which would be a meeting of Heads of State here in Lagos to consider and sign the Treaty establishing the Community. Our officials have been working very hard to meet the deadlines set by that time-table and their work culminated in the meeting of experts and jurists held in Accra, Ghana, between 11th and 15th February of this year. I am informed by my officials who attended the meeting that the delegation from your country took a very active part in the deliberations of the meeting.

The next stage in the evolution of the Economic Community is the convening of a Ministerial Conference which was to have been held in Niamey last April, but which did not take place owing to the change of Government in Niger. Due to its preoccupation with heavy domestic problems, the new Government of Niger has now indicated its inability to provide host facilities for the Second Ministerial Conference. We have just approached the Government of Mali to kindly host the meeting, but they also are not, for good reasons, apparently drought problems, able to oblige. Arising from the need to avoid a lull and press on to our goal and bearing in mind Liberia's past laudable role and worthwhile initiatives in matters affecting the destiny of our peoples in Africa, I have decided to invite the Government of the Republic of Liberia, through Your Excellency, to be so good as to assume the burden of providing host facilities for the second Ministerial Conference which will consider the Draft Treaty proposed in Accra. 15/

President Tolbert's reply on 28th October was as prompt as it was welcome. As quoted by R.I.Onwuka the appropriate passage read: 16/

"Your Excellency has alluded to my Government's unflinching faith in economic co-operation among the States of West Africa as crucial for the economic independence and advancement of the peoples of this region. Today, as in the past, we continue to attach paramount importance to the establishment of such an economic community, particularly since it is envisaged that it will transcend linguistic, cultural, and other barriers.

My Government would be failing in its commitment not only to inter-African co-operation in the West African sub-region but also to the greater unity of our continent if we failed to offer our modest facilities for the holding of a consultation seeking to advance the realisation of these laudable objectives. Therefore, as a further manifestation of this commitment and of our ardent desire not to permit the momentum we have achieved since the Ministerial Meeting held in Lome, Togo, last December, to wane, I am gratified to inform you that the Government and people of Liberia will be delighted to host the Second Ministerial Meeting of the Economic Community of West Africa during the latter half of January 1975.

The meeting was now scheduled for 27-30th January 1975 and the Federal Military Government received the invitation to participate on December 18, 1974. I replied on January 20th acknowledging President Tolbert's letters and confirming that a Nigerian delegation would attend on the dates suggested. <sup>17/</sup> We were represented at Monrovia by a nine-man team, led by Dr. Adedeji, who was accompanied by officials of the Ministry of Economic Development and Reconstruction and the Ministry of External Affairs (Economic Department), with Chief Henry Fajemirokun, President of the Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce, as an adviser.

The purpose of the second ministerial meeting was to prepare the final text of the draft treaty for consideration by the Heads of State at a summit scheduled to be held in Lagos later in 1975. On his return to Nigeria, Dr. Adedeji reported favourably on the outcome of the deliberations and particularly commended the role played by President Tolbert and his skilful management of the conference. Adedeji, in the same report, advised me of "the cordiality and the spirit of amity that permeated the deliberations of the Second Ministerial Meeting of ECOWAS." <sup>18/</sup>

From all accounts it was a highly successful gathering, attended by all countries in the region other than Mali which was unavoidably absent. Reviewing the Commissioner's report, I was particularly impressed by the fact that "the decisions taken during the consideration of the draft treaty were made unanimously and without any reservation whatsoever." And, as I pointed out in a subsequent letter to West African Heads of State, this seemed to "augur well for the Economic Community which we are on the threshold of setting up." In the same letter I therefore expressed my appreciation for the valuable contribution of each of the ministers present. <sup>19/</sup>

After Monrovia, it only remained for me to contact the Heads of State of the region, during February 1975, reminding them that the original time-table agreed in Lome had provided for a summit of West African leaders, to be held in Lagos. Having regard to their onerous responsibilities and tight schedule, and the need to bring to early fruition a scheme so close to our hearts, I suggested the following dates for their consideration : either May 19-21, or May 26-28. I asked for an early reply and an indication of their preference, promising to respect the majority view. <sup>20/</sup> And in a special letter to President Traoré of Mali I also expressed regret "that it was not possible for your country to be represented at the [Monrovia] Conference." <sup>21/</sup>

At this stage I had little reason to doubt the successful outcome of the forthcoming Lagos summit. Admittedly, much had still to be decided and everything had yet to be approved by the various leaders and their governments. There was firm and continuing opposition

to our proposed arrangements from the Senegalese President who now wanted an even larger community and was busily canvassing support in West and Central Africa. But the satisfactory outcome of the recent Monrovia Conference, attended as it was by all the CEAO states other than Mali, and favourable developments elsewhere in the world, where Nigeria's influence and stature continued to grow, all suggested that our hopes for a West African community were about to be realised.

Thanks to Monrovia, West Africa had successfully avoided a more permanent and damaging division into rival economic blocs, based on former colonial attachments. The CEAO and ECOWAS could henceforth develop in harmony, each in its respective sphere, rather than persisting in a sterile and pointless confrontation. At the same time acceptance of the principle of dual membership, for those wishing to belong to both communities, or other similar sub-regional grouping, also implied that the objectives of the two organisations were and would remain compatible. With this proviso it would have appeared extremely churlish to have tried to deny the poorer states whatever benefit they might appear to derive from a community whose objectives were so similar to our own.

It is true that the proposals emerging from the Monrovia meeting undertook to recognise the contractual rights and obligations of member states and to respect their various commitments to other states outside the region and to other groupings within it. To my mind the most serious threat to ECOWAS, after its formation, would not come from the CEAO, nor from principle of 'derogation', with its risk of divided

and therefore attenuated loyalties. The CEAO was itself a relatively restricted body whose development had been punctuated by crises and problems no less serious than those experienced ~~by~~ our own - the ECOWAS.

The main threat would come rather from any failure in the sense of commitment to regional cooperation and the spirit of ECOWAS from member states as a whole. And here, Nigeria, as the largest, most populous and prosperous state, had a special obligation - if only to set a good example to others. In more prosperous times there was always the temptation to maximise one's own advantage, with little care for the well-being of the region as a whole and its future security. On the other hand, economic depression has also often been the signal for short-term measures seeking to cut costs, irrespective of the consequences, and for minimising external commitments, perhaps to win a momentary popularity at home at the risk of destroying the good will that has been so patiently achieved elsewhere. More recent developments and events in the region and particularly in Nigeria, in 1983, are examples of the kind of problems that can arise. We must avoid decisions that would make it difficult or nearly impossible for the intra-regional grouping to achieve greater harmony.

With the meeting in Monrovia in January 1975 the West African grouping had also weathered its first incipient crisis and had successfully overcome the serious problems arising from the sudden change of government in Niger, in April 1974. We had not only averted a serious, if temporary threat to the future of ECOWAS but, more important, had established a valuable precedent for dealing with future constitutional crises in any member state.

With the overthrow of Hamani Diori the principle was soon clearly established that, however important and even essential are the personal relationships between individual Heads of State, they must never be allowed in any way to endanger the orderly development and effective functioning of the West African economic grouping that is being created. We were determined that, come what may personalities must at all times be subordinated to the well-being of the community as a whole.

Niger provided the first opportunity to put our doctrine to the test in this otherwise highly sensitive area. Later and, indeed, within months of the establishment of ECOWAS in May 1975, there would be another even more critical test, with my own removal in the coup of July 29th, 1975. As was only to be expected there was some initial uncertainty about the direction and prospects of ECOWAS, and some delay in pursuing our agreed objectives and in adhering to the original time-table. But ECOWAS survived then just as it has since survived a number of sudden changes of government - in Ghana, Mauritania, Liberia and Upper Volta. There was to be no repetition in West Africa of the damaging effects of the Amin coup on the East African Community after 1971.

Indeed our relations with Niger were soon normalised, particularly after Kountché's visit to Lagos in November 1974, when we, for our parts agreed to provide further aid to help relieve the worst effects of the drought in Niger. At the same time President Kountché was anxious to remove any misunderstanding that might have arisen from his country's failure to host the second ministerial meeting in Niamey. At the end of the visit he assured us

that his "country was ready to support and contribute its quota towards the success of the economic development of the region of West Africa."<sup>22/</sup>

Before describing the Summit of May 1975 which saw the actual birth of ECOWAS, it will be necessary to look in greater detail at a number of events in the preceding years which may help explain the collapse of opposition to ECOWAS from within the Francophone camp and also contributed to the spirit of reconciliation within the region that finally made West African cooperation a reality.

#### Obstacles to the ECOWAS Summit: Removed

The Monrovia meeting of Ministers, in January 1975, differed in many important respects from the earlier Summit there in 1968 - and not least in the presence of representatives from all West African countries, French, English and Portuguese-speaking. There was no 'boycott' this time, or any likelihood of such an action succeeding. If there was still opposition to ECOWAS within the region our opponents had not the numbers to defeat or the strength to obstruct our proposals. Nor would they be willing to expose themselves to the embarrassment and probable humiliation of an open vote by the governments of the region. At best (or worst) they might mount a delaying operation. There was no doubt in my mind, therefore, that, provided the meeting was held, and promptly, such was the support for a West African Economic grouping that there was no question of failure.

There had evidently been a significant transformation in the views and attitudes of governments within the region, and particularly among the



Francophone states. We have already suggested some of the reasons for this change and it only remains to enlarge on these and to explore developments in the years immediately preceding the formation of ECOWAS in 1975. One must start with the growing international economic crisis and its impact on the new and developing states of the Third World, coupled, after 1973, with the effects of the oil price rise and the beginnings of the North-South debate. Within Africa there was the relaxation of the French presence that accompanied the widespread and vocal campaign for the revision of the cooperation agreements between the French-speaking states and the metropole, starting in 1972.

#### French-Nigeria Relations Reviewed

President Georges Pompidou, although himself a Gaullist, had taken the measure of the new forces at work in Africa and elsewhere in the world and had already begun, before his sudden death in April 1974, to sanction certain changes in France's African policy. But his main contribution was in Western Europe, with the removal of the veto on Britain's entry to the EEC. In Africa and in West Africa his administration, still directed by M. Jacques Foccart, had come down strongly - and without much regard for consistency - against cooperation across linguistic boundaries. There was, nevertheless, some improvement in France's relations with Nigeria, following the visit to Lagos, in February 1973, of M. André Bettencourt, *ministre délégué* in the French Foreign Ministry.

The purpose of that visit according to the French was to clear up "certain prejudices and certain misunderstandings."<sup>23/</sup> On the eve of

Bettencourt's arrival our External Affairs Commissioner, Dr. Okoi Arikpo, had recalled that during the civil war "France did us a wrong" but that there was now a desire for "greater understanding" on both sides.

It would, in any case, "be unwise to ignore each other" given that we are literally surrounded by French-speaking African countries in which French influence is still strong and in which French commercial, economic and technical activities are still going on ... We realise it will certainly help our relations with these countries if we bring our relations with France on to an even keel. 24/

The French Minister expressed the earnest hope that, henceforth, relations might become "confident", 25/ while a Nigerian official preferred to speak of "good relations based on mutual suspicion". 26/ Certainly, the French were left in no doubt about the strength of our commitment to the proposed West African grouping and our conviction that strong French pressure had been and was being exerted to prevent the development of that community. In an interview with *Agence France-Presse*, Dr Arikpo had pointed out that cooperation, as interpreted by the French, and existing economic ties between France and her former African colonies were considered by us to be "limiting factors", impeding the "very worthy objectives" of coordinated development and the promotion of trade among the African states themselves. 27/

Both directly, and indirectly, through the EEC and EEC officials such as M. Jean-Francois Deniau, a member of the European Commission in Brussels, and, after April 1973, French Secretary of State for Cooperation, the French had worked for the creation of the CEAO and had supported the policy of West African "unity through stages". This policy advocated by Presidents Senghor and Houphouët-Boigny, envisaged the rapid construction

of a regional grouping limited initially to the Francophone states - whose main purpose was to obstruct our own efforts to create a broader community. We, in Nigeria, had made it abundantly clear that we "would prefer to be on the bus from the beginning, rather than get on when it is moving." <sup>28/</sup>

We were, nevertheless, somewhat encouraged when M. Bettencourt, on leaving Lagos, admitted that "African cannot develop without a more direct cooperation between English and French-speaking countries." <sup>29/</sup> Through our Commissioner for Economic Development, Dr. Adedeji, we had tried to convince the French that the proposed West African Community would be a "prosperous trading partner with Europe" as well as representing the best hope for the development of all the states of the region. <sup>30/</sup> However, the communique issued by the French, after the visit, simply recorded that "the different projects for regional organisation in West Africa were discussed." <sup>31/</sup>

But France's main concern was to explore the growing Nigerian market, particularly as the balance of trade with France now favoured Nigeria. The new concern in France with improving the country's export performance had prompted a search for markets outside the traditional Francophone community while our new-found prosperity and our new importance as a major oil producer called for a revision of earlier attitudes based on prejudice and an unreasoning fear of Nigeria's very size, population, and potential. We were able to indicate to the French that our own interest lay in expanding trade with Europe, rather than participating directly in the French aid programme, whose administration, in our view, left much to be desired.

By developing trade, however, we hoped to diversify our own existing markets, thereby enhancing our development and at the same time securing our independence and control of our own affairs. For these reasons we could only applaud the new policy being cautiously elaborated in France in the 'seventies and encourage its extension to the rest of Africa. For the same reason we made it clear, in February 1973, that, despite Britain's recent accession to the Treaty of Rome, Nigeria would reject any form of association with the EEC that was not concluded voluntarily and on a basis of complete equality.<sup>32/</sup> The Lagos Treaty of 1966, that would have linked Nigeria's economy to that of the EEC, had not been ratified because of French opposition after the outbreak of civil war the following year. It had been negotiated by the previous military administration and was not considered appropriate to our post-war circumstances.

#### Nigeria and the EEC

The terms of the second Yaoundé Convention, concluded with the EEC in 1969 and ratified by some eighteen (later nineteen) African states, were considered an affront to the dignity of a sovereign and independent state and would, in any case, have seriously hampered our own future industrial development. A simple trade agreement therefore seemed to us the most suitable and mutually beneficial type of agreement with the EEC. We recognised, however, that other African states were not in the same fortunate position and, left to themselves, would have little choice in the matter. We did not oppose association for them but indicated, instead, our readiness to encourage and support a concerted attempt to negotiate much better terms.

The formal incorporation of Britain, Ireland and Denmark into the EEC in January 1973 made it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to defend the continued division of Africa along linguistic lines. Just as Britain and France could now cooperate within the EEC it seemed reasonable to look forward to increased cooperation among their former African colonies. The negotiation of a new agreement with the EEC would evidently require considerable coordination on the part of the new states if they were to have any hope of securing their vital interests. The immediate constitution of ECOWAS would have provided just the kind of arena where African states could elaborate their demands and concert their future tactics. But, although circumstances were increasingly favourable to ECOWAS, there were still important obstacles to be surmounted.

The best way of removing those obstacles was to show our African friends and future partners the extent of the benefits to be derived from economic cooperation in this as in other fields. While disclaiming any selfish interest on our own part, Nigeria therefore took a stand against the more discriminatory provisions of the old Yaoundé Conventions, particularly in the matter of 'reverse preferences' and argued the need to extend and liberalise the operations of the European Development Fund. In our view the new agreement, by bringing together the African and other developing states, could provide a new and more fruitful basis for future North-South relations. And in this we soon had the support not only of most African states, but of much of the Third World, as well as the sympathy of some EEC officials and several of the European states. <sup>33/</sup>

Hitherto, Senghor had been conducting preliminary negotiations in Brussels and elsewhere on behalf of the eighteen associated African states, mostly Francophone, and his objective was the conclusion of a new but improved Yaoundé agreement - Yaoundé III. Meanwhile, in 1972, the Commonwealth Secretariat had organised meetings of the various Commonwealth states affected by Britain's entry to the EEC. And it was our aim in these meetings and in the discussions that continued during the following year to try to broaden the terms of reference to encompass first the African states as a whole and later our colleagues in the Pacific and the Caribbean. While circumstances might differ and situations might vary, our problems were not usually so very dissimilar.

While the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) had published some useful and critical accounts of the Yaoundé Convention, the OAU, itself, seemed a more appropriate forum where African states and their leaders could consider the sensitive and often critical issues that would affect their future development and well-being for years to come. Robert Gardiner, Executive Secretary-General of the ECA, had himself spoken of the forthcoming negotiations with the EEC as a "peculiarly African" problem determining the continent's future economic relations with Western Europe.

Europe needs Africa as much as Africa needs Europe. In the past Africa was led to such conferences by metropolitan powers. For the first time we have the option to enter such discussions on our own. Never before has our continent been confronted with such a challenge. We cannot avoid it and we cannot afford to fail.

We soon had the support of other Commonwealth states in Africa and a decision to transfer the meeting to the OAU was carried by a majority at the Accra meeting of the ECA in February 1973.<sup>35/</sup> Accordingly, in May, a conference of Trade, Finance and Development Ministers met in Abidjan under the auspices of the OAU and there the Nigerian delegation worked patiently to reach a consensus which could then be considered by the OAU summit in Addis Ababa, later that month. Abidjan thus provided the first real opportunity for a meeting between African 'associates' and the so-called 'associables'. The many differences that were revealed between and within the various groupings, made a compromise not only inevitable but also desirable.

The OAU summit, reviewing the Abidjan resolutions, was able nevertheless to take a more forthright stand, unanimously approving the "eight principles". The first of which was "non-reciprocity for trade and tariff concessions given by the EEC." While not completely rejecting reciprocity, this did effectively exclude the application of reverse preferences. In keeping with the Nigerian position, all African states were urged to coordinate and harmonise their stand during the subsequent negotiations and to avoid decisions that might in any way be prejudicial to African interests.<sup>36/</sup> And, as the newly elected Chairman of the OAU, it then fell to myself and the OAU officials to try to implement these decisions.

Yaoundé, with its narrow, smug, paternalistic assumptions, which confirmed existing colonial 'spheres of influence' within Africa and sought to perpetuate economic dependency, was largely incompatible with the sentiments of most African governments in the 'seventies. Nor were the majority of African states prepared to support the demands of some Francophone leaders for separate treaties and differential terms, discriminating between 'associates' on the one hand and potential 'associables' on the other.

West African leaders again occupied a prominent position in the debates that followed although the decisions taken would affect most of Africa and much of the Third World. Senghor and Houphouët-Boigny led the resistance to the OAU policy seeking to defend existing forms of association with the EEC, while recognising the need for some improvement in the terms, especially regarding trade and the provision of economic aid. A series of statements by Senghor in the course of a tour of West European capitals, early in 1973, offer a clear and concise account of his views on Africa's relationship with Europe, notably his ardent defence of the concept of *Eurafrique*.

In an interview in France he spoke of an "ancient symbiosis" between the two continents, while elsewhere he warned that "to abandon Africa for mirages would not be realistic for the Europeans."<sup>37/</sup> Where Europeans could never hope to match American influence in Latin America, or Russian and Chinese influence in Asia, the Americans and the Chinese, to say nothing of the Russians, were extending their influence in Africa, presumably at the expense of Europe. Returning to Africa in April he admitted that:

Some European countries were cool towards Association, but he said he had tried to convince them that 'Eur-Africa' was in the interests of Africa and Europe:

38/

On balance he maintained that the Yaoundé system had served the associated states well and was also in the best interests of other African countries. "We hope that the greatest number of Anglophones, all nineteen if possible, join the Yaoundé association." Failing that, it might be



necessary to differentiate, for a time, between those who accepted the principles of association in advance and other states which might prefer unique arrangements to suit their own individual circumstances. Finally, Senghor insisted that he had nevertheless been working towards West African cooperation in the broadest sense of that term. In Brussels he had explained to members of the EEC Commission that:

He had been trying to organise information meetings at ministerial level between associated and associable states and that he had elaborated a draft treaty foreseeing a progressive economic integration in the Atlantic states from Nouakchott to Kinshasa. The adherence of the greatest possible number of African states to the future Yaoundé Convention would help this great project. 39/

Senghor's defence of reverse preferences, to which we and other Commonwealth and African leaders were strongly opposed, was bound up inextricably with his advocacy of continued and increasing European involvement in Africa. They were a means of securing and retaining the attention of the European states, offered some scope for future bargaining on the part of the African states, were a symbol of the essential equality of the two sides, and were the basis of "a Europe-Africa free trade area." In any case they were only partially enforced and by those states who perceived their true value. 40/

The concern of the Francophone leaders with the European connection and their anxiety lest existing ties with France, already weakened in the previous decade, might succumb to pressure by the former British colonies for a new type of economic agreement, at once more open, more flexible and more equitable, was perhaps understandable. But their position was

We were therefore happy with the subsequent decision, of OAU Trade Ministers, meeting in Dar-es-Salaam in October 1973, that the role of African spokesman and Chairman of the Council of Ministers should rotate every three months. Such an arrangement could only help to cement the common front of African governments for the approaching negotiations in Brussels. Despite the efforts of the Senegalese Minister, the conference in Dar-es-Salaam refused to entertain the notion of reciprocity and was not enthusiastic about the Ivory Coast proposal for a Europe-Africa free trade area. Nor was it sympathetic to Diori's suggestion that the present and the prospective associates should co-habit within two separate groupings for the next five years, when conditions for a possible fusion might have improved. <sup>41/</sup>

It is difficult to exaggerate the significance of these negotiations for the dignity and independence of the African and other developing states, for the future of North-South relations, and for the success of economic cooperation in West Africa and elsewhere. And as the East African Community entered its terminal phase - the result of prolonged ideological tensions and personal incompatibilities - the impetus for renewed cooperation now came from inside West Africa which had itself long been a prey to artificial, colonial boundaries and, more recently, to economic policies described as 'neo-colonial'.

It was left to Julius Nyerere to point the lesson of the conference at Dar-es-Salaam and of the previous meetings in Lagos, Addis Ababa and Abidjan:

Africa had been able to speak with one voice in Brussels in July, and at the Gatt meeting in Tokyo in September. It should not be diverted from its purpose by default, by internal divisions, or by half-hearted and ill-prepared positions...

The negotiations must result in an equitable arrangement, for the African states in years ahead need to breathe freely and they cannot be expected to be placed in an institutional straightjacket. <sup>42/</sup>

nevertheless untenable, even in the short term, given French approval for Britain's entry to the EEC and given the growing concern among African and other Third World states about their independence, the imbalance economic development of world trade, and their future economic development.

Once other African states had accepted our view that only the OAU was competent to take a decision on their behalf, the only possible outcome was joint negotiations for a new agreement with the EEC, and on a basis very different from that of the previous Yaoundé Conventions. To try to perpetuate the division of Africa along essentially colonial lines was no longer practical politics as it could only undermine the evident need for African solidarity in such vexed areas of policy as price stabilisation, aid to the poor and landlocked countries, and industrial and resource development - where inter-African cooperation was seen by all to be of vital concern.

By the same token, there was widespread support for and acceptance of the decision to invite Caribbean and Pacific states to be represented at an Africa-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) conference in Lagos, on July 7-9, 1973. And it was there that our Commissioner for Trade, Wenike Briggs, was chosen as African spokesman for the subsequent negotiations in Brussels. Nigeria, however, had no wish to appear to dominate proceedings, especially as our aim was not to become an associated state, but rather to assist other governments in their concerted attempt to improve the terms of trade with Western Europe and to remove the stigma of 'inferiority' attached to the earlier agreements.

The final outcome of the negotiations, whose conclusions were embodied in the Lomé Convention ratified in February 1975, was widely acclaimed, in Europe, Africa and the Third World generally, as a major advance on the previous arrangements. Once and for all the new agreement confirmed the value of cooperation in securing recognition of African needs and interests. It also conferred a new sense of dignity and purpose on the peoples of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific states. Even our Francophone critics could only approve the final agreements from which they, too, would greatly benefit.

Some of the concessions secured at Lomé directly favoured our own West African proposal : for example, ten per cent of EEC aid was now to be reserved for regional development projects. Evidently, the value of cooperation was recognised in West European as well as in African capitals, while other provisions likewise encouraged efforts at regional cooperation and self-help and a greater measure of integration.

Lomé represented a series of tangible concessions for the most part wrung from the European governments after hard and protracted bargaining, and not without several attempts to exploit and widen our differences so as to reduce our effectiveness. While the new arrangements were far from ideal they did point the way to a more positive approach in the future. And, just as important from the view point of ECOWAS, Nigeria's close and continuing involvement in the negotiations, her support for pragmatic solutions and her efforts to secure unity through compromise, but not at the expense of principle, did much to allay earlier fears of Nigerian domination or an Anglo-Saxon hegemony. This would shortly prove to be of inestimable value in the final negotiations for the creation of ECOWAS. As a Nigerian academic has aptly remarked:

'Mutual respect and trust developed; 'the spirit of Lomé' became the slogan. A political climate and economic structure had been brought into being which allowed ECOWAS to be concluded.' 43/

The French themselves were among the first to recognise these changes and their implications for future policy in Africa. The Lomé agreements, following as they did the Monrovia meeting of West African Ministers, effectively abolished the distinction in the economic matters between the Francophone and other African states - at least where the EEC was concerned. To a considerable degree it also abolished, at least on the surface, the special economic and political relationship that had endured between France and her former African colonies since their independence in the 'sixties.

#### Nigeria and the New French Administration

Although the direction of events had been clear since the resignation of General de Gaulle in 1969, if not before, the French administration was able to adapt more readily to the new situation after the election in June 1975 of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing as the third President of the Fifth Republic, following the sudden and unexpected death of Georges Pompidou. Although Finance Minister under Pompidou and associated therefore with many of the new economic arrangements concluded between France and her former colonies in the early 'seventies, Giscard d'Estaing was a Conservative and not a Gaullist leader. He favoured a much more pragmatic approach to the question of relations with Africa and could more easily

accept the principle of a loosely-knit, French-speaking community of states, whose leaders met regularly, usually outside Paris, and on a basis of mutual equality. Hence the creation of a new Ministry of Cooperation and the appointment of a 'liberal' minister, Pierre Abelin, himself a former associate of the new President.<sup>44/</sup> The new aims and priorities of French policy in Africa were soon elaborated and approved by the government in Paris.

Relations between the metropole and the Francophone states would be on a basis of "strict equality". Cooperation programmes, aid and technical assistance would reflect, wherever possible, the preferences of the recipients and would conform to their own pre-existing policies and programmes. The essential diversity of interests within the Francophone community would be respected since "the fact of speaking the same tongue may facilitate communication but is not necessarily conducive to any uniformity of thought."<sup>45/</sup> The new administration formally recognised the urgent need for some form of structured dialogue between industrialised and developing nations, but on a basis of shared or complementary rather than antagonistic interests.

More important, perhaps, than any abstract statements of principle, were the actions of the new government, symbolised by the removal of the Secretary-General for African and Malagasy Affairs, M. Jacques Foccart, an old opponent of Nigerian unity, believed to be hostile to ECOWAS, and long associated with a tough, interventionist stand by France in the affairs of many African states.<sup>46/</sup> That act alone did much to help reconcile France with some of her more critical and outspoken Francophone partners, as well as with former opponents like Sékou Touré, in Guinea, who would soon resume normal diplomatic relations with the metropole and with his Francophone neighbours.

Nigeria, too, looked forward to a better relationship with France and the resumption of full normal relations. Here the visit of Dr. Arikpo to Paris, in November 1974, the first by a Nigerian Foreign Minister since the civil war, was described by one commentator as the beginning of an 'age of reason' in relations between the two countries.<sup>47/</sup> And with the end of the Gaullist era France could now approach Nigeria from the viewpoint of economic self-interest rather than political advantage.

'Although some sentimental attachment to France's 'glorious role' in Francophone Africa survives in some circles, the pragmatic President Giscard d'Estaing seems to be eager to deal with Nigeria, and for that matter, with any Anglophone African state on the basis of equality not paternalistic sentiment.'<sup>48/</sup>

#### ECOWAS and the Francophone Leaders

Largely as a result of all these developments the prospects for ECOWAS improved considerably between 1972 and 1974. As we have seen, the successful meeting of West African ministers from all states in Monrovia, in January 1975, to be followed a month later by the negotiation of the Lomé Agreements, left no doubt in our mind as to the formation of ECOWAS within the very near future.

The major change between 1972 and 1974 was not in the attitude of the English-speaking governments, which had consistently supported the idea of a West African economic community, but in the views of the Francophone leaders, whose support for the community was so crucial. At the beginning of the 'seventies we were confronted by the combined opposition of the Ivory Coast and Senegal, Houphouët-Boigny having successfully persuaded Senghor of the need for a Francophone community within West Africa, if only to try to counter-balance the new and growing influence of Nigeria and to defeat our efforts to create a broader economic grouping.

By the middle of the decade, however, the situation had changed significantly and it was Senghor who was now searching for pretexts to postpone the formation of ECOWAS, while Houphouët-Boigny seemed increasingly reconciled to and even enthusiastic about the prospect of the new community and the role that the Ivory Coast and her partners might play therein. It is possible, and even probable, that Houphouët-Boigny responded more promptly than Senghor to the subtle changes in French policy during these years. And the most visible and striking change in the attitude of the Ivory Coast government was between December 1972 and December 1974.

The visit of our External Affairs Commissioner, Dr. Arikpo, to Abidjan, in December 1972, certainly seemed to have dispelled some of the misgivings there concerning relations between the two countries after the civil war and the nature of our interest in the proposed West African grouping. While I had offered reconciliation to our former opponents as early as 1970, I had not thought it appropriate to include Abidjan among the capitals that I visited in the course of my West African tours. Arikpo's visit, however, was evidence of our good-will towards other states in the region and the sincerity of our efforts to promote a lasting reconciliation. As a result there was a distinct improvement in relations between our states which continued during 1973. <sup>49/</sup>

In August 1973, following the establishment of the CEAO, we naturally included Abidjan in the list of capitals to be visited by the joint Nigeria-Togo delegation whose purpose was to revive interest in the broader scheme for a West African economic community. Dr. Adedeji and the Togolese Trade Minister, Henri Dogo, were able to make contact with their Ivorian counterparts and to communicate to the President our cordial invitation to be represented at the



forthcoming Lomé conference of West African Ministers. Houphouët-Boigny's statements to foreign journalists at that time were distinctly encouraging. He indicated not only that the Ivory Coast fully supported the idea of a fourteen-nation community in the region, but also pointed out that there was no incompatibility between our own ECOWAS and the smaller CEAO.

Everything must be done to make what we have created work. It is not a question of sabotaging what we have done, but on the contrary, it means developing it into a much bigger ensemble. The Ivory Coast is full of goodwill for the emergence of a great West African economic grouping. 50/

By October 1974, this attitude of cautious approval had evolved into something approaching a definite commitment to ECOWAS, prompting an editorial comment in West Africa to the effect that:

It is now believed that President Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, long a champion of the view that economic unity of the Francophone states should precede any wider grouping, has come round to the view that a union of the whole area is desirable. 51/

The paradox was that Senghor, who had championed West African economic integration in 1968, now continued to pay lip service to that ideal while multiplying his criticisms both of ECOWAS and of Nigerian involvement in it.

Ironically some quarters seem to feel that there is now more cautiousness in Dakar about the larger grouping than in Abidjan, which, if true, is a reversal of roles, as President Senghor had played an important role in bringing about the Monrovia meeting in 1968. 52/

Or again,

Now, it seems, it is President Senghor of Senegal who has to be persuaded both that a purely Francophone grouping can make little contribution to the real economic needs of the area and that the wider 'Atlantic' grouping (which would now presumably include even Angola), which he has mentioned is unrealistic. 53/

It is perhaps easier to explain the change of policy in the Ivory Coast than to account for the evolution of Senghor's views after 1970. Once reassured that Nigeria harboured no lasting resentment against the Ivory Coast and its government, and that our regional project was not directed in any sense against the Francophone states or the Entente, Houphouët-Boigny was more likely than Senghor to be influenced by economic and political realities both in Africa and elsewhere in the world.

Under pressure from his Entente partners, including Togo, Dahomey and above all, Niger, aware of the drift of French policy, and anxious to expand the market for his new industrial output, Houphouët-Boigny prepared to accept ECOWAS, at least in principle. His acquiescence turned to enthusiasm, in the course of 1973, following the establishment of the CEAO and when it seemed that our own West African project was well under way with some prospect of becoming a reality.

Given that membership of the ECOWAS was not incompatible with that of the CEAO, the Ivory Coast, like other Francophone states, had much to gain and little to lose by becoming a foundation member of both organisations. As such it would have privileged access to the two major West African groupings and an important share of the institutional patronage - although, to his credit, Houphouët-Boigny has always disclaimed any interest in the latter, either for himself or for his country.

Senhor's seeming opposition to ECOWAS was unfortunate and is less easy to explain in view of his previous energetic commitment to regional organisation across linguistic lines:

Senegal's own political tradition is very much on the side of enlarged contact with neighbouring states, and President Senhor has frequently spoken of his dream of a larger grouping stretching from Nouakchott to Kinshasa.

54/

Admittedly he had encountered many practical problems in his earlier attempts at regional and sub-regional integration, which may have made him the more determined to succeed this time but within a narrower constitutional framework. His growing preoccupation with the difficulties of securing economic integration on a regional scale may also have been reinforced by his recent experience of the problems of trying to regroup just the Francophone states of West Africa.

He might have concluded, as we ourselves had done, that interdependence had advanced so far in West Africa that regional structures now offered the best and perhaps the only chance of success. Instead he proposed by means of sub-regional organisation to arrive one day at a vast Atlantic grouping of states whose only rationale was to undermine our own regional proposals. Hence the emphasis by Senegal, in the 'seventies, on "unity by stages".

According to the Senegalese Information Minister, Dr. Daouda Sow, the Senegalese government agreed in principle to the wider grouping, but felt that it was better to proceed by stages and first group together countries in the same cultural areas.

55/

At the other extreme, there was Senghor's new commitment to OCAM in the 'seventies and his growing preoccupation with dialogue and cultural exchange on an inter-continental scale.

Possibly the burden of trying to breathe new life into the ailing OCAM, to which the Senegalese President is currently devoting his considerable political skills may have diverted his attention from the wider political vision which he himself has so imaginatively portrayed in the past. 56/

From this vantage point the idea of a continental grouping of Atlantic states may have seemed more attractive to Senghor than our own West African proposal, although it was difficult to square this with his continuing insistence on the obstacles to effective integration at the regional level.

Finally, there was Senghor's life-long commitment, not only to *Francophonie*, but to the related idea of *Eurafrique*, which explained his adherence to the principles of Yaoundé and his support for the idea, which he shared with Houphouët-Boigny, of a free trade area between Western Europe and Africa. This, in turn, involved the application of reciprocity in the shape of reverse preferences. Senghor welcomed Britain's membership of the Common Market, as a prelude to greater cooperation among African states of different colonial backgrounds and language, and as forging closer ties between the two continents. But he was much less happy with Britain's efforts to involve the EEC in the future development of the Caribbean, Pacific and Asian nations.

Senghor shared our concern to defend the dignity and independence of the African states but he believed this could only be done in the context

of inter-dependence between Africa and Europe and saw Nigeria's opposition to Yaoundé as a conscious attempt to subvert that inter-dependence.

Despite his obvious attachment to the liberal principles, inherent in the British political and legal systems, he remained suspicious of the Anglo-Saxon world with its wide ranging interests and frequent insensitivity to European and African aspirations to shape their own future. While his relations with Nigeria remained correct and cordial he was perhaps too ready to listen to those who, for their own dubious reasons, attributed motives to our actions that would not otherwise bear serious examination.

Less concerned than Senghor with global visions, Houphouët-Boigny would have seen the entry of Britain into the EEC as signalling the need for a further reappraisal of his country's relations with the English-speaking African states, beginning with Nigeria which was the largest and most prosperous. Whatever fears the Ivory Coast may earlier have had about a Nigerian hegemony within West Africa, its leadership had by 1973 concluded that its economic future lay in a closer association with all the other West African states, rather than in splendid isolation or in restricted groupings of ideologically compatible states. Despite the recent reconciliation with Houphouët-Boigny, at the end of 1971, Senghor soon found himself defending theses that were no longer shared by the Ivory Coast, or indeed by the French, and which left himself and Senegal increasingly isolated within West Africa.

#### Inter-dependence must begin in Africa

West African leaders were by now familiar with Senghor's arguments in favour of closer cooperation between Europe and Africa which involved, among

other things, the creation of a free trade area linking the two continents. They were aware too, of his warnings of a possible contraction in European investment should they continue not only to press their demands for improved terms of trade but also to insist on the removal of reciprocity from future agreements with the EEC.

By 1975, however, the great majority were also aware that inter-dependence between Europe and Africa was by no means confined to cultural and scientific exchanges, which might be mutually advantageous, but that, in the all-important economic sphere, it often meant an extreme and pernicious form of dependency, which worked mainly, if not exclusively, for the benefit of the former colonial powers. And, like us, they were now convinced that the best, and perhaps only hope of reversing this trend was to develop cooperation and inter-dependence among the African states themselves, beginning at the regional level. This then was our first priority.

There was no question of Africa turning its back on Europe or the rest of the world, or of African governments entertaining extravagant illusions about an early self-sufficiency, or wilfully depressing living standards in the ruthless pursuit of 'boot-strap' development. Europe would obviously continue for some time to provide the major markets for most African products, and would continue to furnish the bulk of our capital investment and a high proportion of our imports.

Our aim was not just to modify the terms of trade with Europe but also to transform the pattern of that trade, by developing our own industries, diversifying the range of our exports, and reducing our dependency on European imports to ensure that only essential needs were provided for in this way, while we would no longer import items that could eventually be produced or marketed more cheaply and efficiently in Africa itself. The first and foremost consideration, therefore, was to explore fully the potential for economic cooperation within Africa and, in our case, West Africa, rather than perpetuate or even increase our dependency on others.

Such cooperation was intended, of course, to strengthen our independence and further our development, both individually and collectively. There was no question of exchanging one form of dependency for another, or of accepting the domination, political or economic, of any one West African state or group of states. Fears of Nigerian hegemony, often disseminated by our European opponents, were - as I have already tried to show - entirely groundless. Any attempt to dictate to our prospective partners would have been self-defeating and counter-productive. By weakening the community as a whole it would have negated the many other benefits that we, in common with the other West African states, hoped to derive from the new arrangements.

However, in all successful regional experiments there have always been some states who, by reason of their situation, experience or resources, are expected to contribute more than their partners, whether in material terms or in the supply of administrative skills. Without such a political or economic core the community as a whole would be the poorer - in dynamism,

cohesion and sense of direction and purpose. Such states have a particular contribution to make in the formative stages of the community and, again, in times of severe crisis and adversity. At all times, however, cooperation includes a political as well as an economic dimension, and, to be effective, each and every state must be seen to participate actively in all stages of the community's development.

Nigeria and Togo were certainly prominent in the movement for West African economic cooperation after 1970, but had no wish to monopolise its councils or to claim a disproportionate share of the credit for its final success. I have already emphasised that ECOWAS was not the work of any one state or individual leader, but was the outcome of years of experimentation and much hard and patient effort on the part of many governments and of leaders from every country within the region - to say nothing of the invaluable contribution made by agencies such as the Economic Commission for Africa.

The role of Nigeria and Togo was not to 'invent' the idea of regional economic cooperation, or to try to impose it on others, but rather to demonstrate that economic cooperation in West Africa was both highly desirable and, given the will, perfectly viable. More than that - it was indispensable! Which seems an appropriate point at which to return to our account of the events following the meeting of West African Ministers in Monrovia, in January 1975, and culminating in the Lagos Summit in May and the formal inauguration of ECOWAS.



Convening the ECOWAS Summit

My letter of February, addressed to the other Heads of State, had suggested alternative dates for the forthcoming Summit in Lagos, and most of the recipients had already replied by the end of March. I was particularly moved by the prompt response of Ould Daddah of Mauritania, and his cordial wishes for the "total success" of the meeting; and by the letter from President Dawda Jawara, of The Gambia, who articulated so well the sentiments that motivated all of us.

In accordance with our policy to strengthen the bonds of friendship with all our neighbours in Africa and to seek closer and more effective relations in this region, my Government has always attached paramount importance to the idea of creating a West African Economic Community. It is clear to us that in a world beset by rampant inflation, recession and the ever deteriorating terms of trade, our economic emancipation lies in the meaningful regional integration of our economic, industrial and technological resources.

It gives me great pleasure therefore to offer you my warmest and sincere congratulations for your initiative in this great endeavour and for the steadfast and purposeful way in which you have pursued the matter to a successful conclusion. It is a source of pride and satisfaction to all of us that the Second Ministerial Meeting of ECOWAS in Monrovia in January this year completed its business with such unprecedented success.

I am confident that the same cordiality, mutual trust and accommodation will prevail when we meet in Lagos to set the seal on this great achievement.

57/

All the replies received were positive with the single exception of that from President Senghor of Senegal, who expressed some reservations about our proposed meeting, while attempting to introduce some novel ideas at this late stage in the proceedings.<sup>58/</sup> Since the beginning of 1974 Senghor had been conducting an intense diplomatic campaign to persuade the

Francophone states of Central and Equatorial Africa to lend their support to his proposed Atlantic grouping of states, to extend from Mauritania as far as the borders of Angola.

In January 1974, the Senegalese Prime Minister, Abdou Diouf, had visited Cameroon, while in February it was the turn of Senghor, himself, to visit the Congolese Republic (Congo-Brazzaville), Gabon and the Central African Republic.<sup>59/</sup> In June of that year the Congolese Prime Minister was the guest of Senghor, in Dakar, and August saw a meeting of the OCAM Summit in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic.<sup>60/</sup>

It was already clear to us, in Nigeria, that few, if any, of these states wished to be full members of an economic community which also included the West African countries. As early as 1972 we had invited two of our eastern neighbours, Cameroon and Chad, to participate in ECOWAS, but were then advised that, while not wishing to be altogether excluded from the West African grouping, their main economic interests lay elsewhere, with the Central African Customs Union (UDEAC) and with the other states of that region.

Nevertheless, Senghor persisted with his policy right up until the eve of the Lagos Summit itself. In his reply of March 5, he referred to my earlier letter of February 12, which had suggested "two dates for the forthcoming *Summit of Heads of State to study the proposed Community of West African States*" (his emphasis). He continued:

You know what the attitude of Senegal is as far as this problem is concerned. We are always ready to participate in all the meetings convened to examine this problem, either at the Ministerial level or Summit level. The serious objection which we continue to raise is that this Community should be parallel to that of East Africa and that it should extend from the North of Mauritania to the South of Zaire. In the absence of this, it would cut West Africa into two, whereas if united, this West Africa would constitute the most powerful Community because it would be the most populated and the richest, with the most qualified high-level manpower in the whole of Africa. 62/

Senghor indicated in the same letter that he could not be in Lagos at either of the times suggested - as they coincided with an official visit he was to make to Mexico, which would be followed by a brief stay in the United States, as guest of the American Writers' Pen Club, when he also proposed to meet President Ford. He was therefore unable to attend a West African Summit before May 28 and had inquired from our ambassador if it would be possible to hold the meeting during the first half of June. His letter, nevertheless, concluded on a more hopeful note. "If, however, I cannot be present at the Summit in Lagos, Mr. Abdou Diouf, my Prime Minister, will replace me accordingly." 62/

Despite Senghor's evident reservations about the Community and the problem of agreeing a suitable date for the proposed Summit, we thought his reply to be quite positive, on balance, considering some of the statements on ECOWAS attributed to him in the recent past. He had, after all, taken the trouble to propose alternative dates and had given the assurance that Senegal would be represented in Lagos, either by himself or by the Prime Minister. The latter was known to be more conciliatory and less difficult than Senghor and was likely therefore to raise fewer objections.

But my relief was shortlived for, in a subsequent letter dated March 10, 1975, written within a week of the first, President Senghor had chosen to adopt a very different and more aggressive tone.

I have since learnt from several African Heads of State that the meeting to which you are inviting us, at the end of May, was meant not for continuing the discussion on the CEDEAO /i.e., ECOWAS/, but for the signature of the draft Treaty.

If that be the case, I could not associate myself with it. In fact we have expressed, several times and very frankly, our objections to this plan. Whereas none of these objections has yet been removed.

It is because I have a great esteem and friendship for Your Excellency - and I have often had occasion to say it to some African Heads of State - that I cannot leave You in any doubt as to Senegal's stand, which has always been constant in the matter.

63/

At first I was discouraged but, recalling the more positive aspects of his earlier letter, I hoped, instead, for a more favourable response to my next communication which was a formal invitation in April 1975 to attend the ECOWAS Summit on May 26-28. This was delivered to Senghor, personally, by the Nigerian Commissioner for Information, Mr. Edwin Clark, whose brother, J.P. Clark, was himself a poet and writer. This apparently enabled the Commissioner to establish a good rapport with the President as their discussion ranged over a variety of cultural matters, including the Festival of Arts and Culture, shortly to be held in Nigeria. Mr. Clark later reported to me that the impact of the conversation on Senghor was quite visible and the reply we later received was certainly most satisfactory.

On April 8 I was able to advise the other Heads of State that the preference of the majority was for the later date, May 26-28, 1975, and cordially invited them to Lagos "for the purpose of considering and signing

the draft Treaty", a copy of which was attached to the letter. <sup>64/</sup>

To expedite proceedings at the Summit, I also proposed a preparatory meeting of Ministers in Lagos on May 23-24. The letter was conveyed to the various recipients by two members of the Federal Executive Council, Mr. E.K. Clark and Colonel Dan Suleiman (Commissioner for Special Duties), each of whom covered half the countries of the region. It achieved the desired objective as all had replied within a fortnight and the responses once again, were positive, confirming the widespread, almost universal support throughout West Africa for our regional initiative.

President Tolbert's reply was couched in quite flattering language:

Liberia has always subscribed to and fostered the view that the fruits of political independence can best be enjoyed through economic cooperation on a multi-national basis. Hence, as for me, my dear Friend and Brother, I can assure you that I will be at your side in Lagos as we consider and sign the aforesaid Treaty, thereby witnessing the birth of an organisation which we believe will contribute immensely to the economic emancipation of our sub-region and our Continent.

Accordingly, we are deeply gratified by the assiduous and painstaking efforts undertaken by you, my dear Friend and Brother, and our Brother President Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo, for the initiatives you have both undertaken to advance economic cooperation in our sub-region and to reactivate the concept of West African cooperation. We heartily congratulate both of you and are very appreciative of all your endeavours to ensure the fullest participation of our Brother Heads of State and of our sub-region in the forthcoming Lagos Summit ... We reaffirm, once more ... cooperation and the great cause of peace, unity, solidarity and progress in our sub-region and Continent. <sup>65/</sup>

Following this letter of April 18 from Africa's oldest independent state, we received another dated April 23 from the most recent state, Guinea-Bissau. President Luiz Cabral seemed overwhelmed, perhaps because

the special envoy, who personally delivered my letter was the first representative of Nigeria, and perhaps the first official representative of a major and important African country, to visit the country which had only recently been liberated.

It was also with special pride that we were able to welcome your special envoy at the head of the first Nigerian delegation which is visiting our country after its total liberation from colonial domination, and we made it a point to reaffirm all the fraternal esteem and admiration of our people and of our country's freedom fighters for the great brotherly Nigerian people and for Your Excellency ... who has placed himself in the forefront of fighters for Unity in Africa.

66/

#### The Deliberations of the CEAO Leaders

Meanwhile we awaited with interest the outcome of the CEAO Summit, which met in Niamey on April 7-8, 1975 - the first to be held since the inception of the organisation in April 1973. The CEAO had continued to experience internal problems, partly the result of Diori's overthrow in April 1974 by Lieutenant Colonel S.Kountché, which left an unfortunate vacuum at the top.

The brief but bitter border war between Upper Volta and Mali at the end of 1974 created even more serious difficulties which the CEAO states were themselves unable to resolve without external intervention, by Presidents Eyadema (then Chairman of the Entente), Touré and Boumedienne, with the assistance of the Secretary-General of the OAU.<sup>67/</sup> Once again a crisis had demonstrated the essential inter-dependence of the region as a whole. Moreover, because of the war, Malian officials of the CEAO serving in Ouagadougou, capital of Upper Volta, and headquarters of the sub-regional organisation, had to be withdrawn, further disrupting the work of the organisation.

The April 1975 Summit of the CEAO, from a confidential report, took a dim view of this action against its officials and, in the final communiqué, General Lamizana of Upper Volta was apparently reminded of "the imperious necessity to respect the diplomatic immunities that protect officials of the CEAO." <sup>68/</sup> This seems to have appeased President Traoré of Mali, who had otherwise threatened to disrupt the proceedings and apparently refused to speak to Lamizana throughout the conference. For Lamizana, however, it amounted to a severe rebuff, particularly as he was not allowed to consult his ministers and experts before the communiqué was published.

The conference did, on the other hand, afford a kind of indirect recognition of Kountché's leadership of Niger, despite the affinity of many of the Francophone leaders with the former Niger president. And there were some achievements, albeit of form rather than of substance, including a decision on the date of application of the regional cooperation tax and agreement on the size of the Communal Development Fund for the year 1976.

Our concern, however, was not with the internal organisation of the CEAO and its private deliberations but rather with the approaching Summit in Lagos, to which all Francophone leaders in the region had been invited. There was still some uncertainty about Senghor's attitude to ECOWAS and his likely tactics at the Lagos conference, although it was increasingly improbable that he himself would attend and personally sanction the formation of the new body. We were convinced, however, that the great majority of Francophone leaders would in any case participate in the Summit and sign the ECOWAS Treaty. But there would certainly be an attempt at Niamey to harmonise their views and concert their tactics before the Lagos meeting.

Already the Secretariat of the CEAO had prepared a report entitled "A Critical Examination of the Draft Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)", for consideration by the Council of Ministers of the CEAO states prior to the Niamey Summit. <sup>6y</sup> That document was largely critical of the proposed ECOWAS Treaty, comparing it unfavourably in many respects - and in our view unfairly - with the Treaty of the CEAO. It did concede that the principles and objectives of the two organisations, as set out in their respective Treaties, were very similar. But it went on to insist at some length that "this resemblance does not extend to the means of implementing them."

Much of the report, then, was taken up with complaints about the "silence" of our draft Treaty concerning the regulations and procedures by which we hoped to be able to realise our objectives, giving "the impression that the document rather resembles a series of declarations of intent." However, the authors had ignored the fact that our Treaty, establishing the West African economic grouping, would be supplemented by a series of Protocols which, because of lack of time and innumerable other difficulties, aggravated by our insistence on the fullest possible consultation with all fifteen countries involved, would not be finalised before the Treaty itself was signed in May.

Our procedure therefore differed markedly from that used by the Francophone countries in adopting the CEAO Treaty in April 1973. The final signature of that document had been repeatedly postponed following a protracted debate over the details of its implementation - a debate which had also revealed the full extent of the divisions within the relatively



small Francophone community. We had opted instead to circulate in advance the various working papers that might later serve as a basis of discussion before the Protocols were finally approved.

It had been our original intention to submit both the Treaty and the accompanying Protocols for the approval of the Heads of State at the inaugural Summit. But, as the latter were not yet in their final form, and as most states in the region seemed anxious to proceed to the creation of the new community in the shortest possible time, we preferred to concentrate on getting approval for the Treaty itself in Lagos, with the details of its implementation to be settled later.

Ours, in any case, was a much larger and more complex undertaking than the CEAO. Even if there had been sufficient time available, there was a strong case for deferring consideration of the detailed procedures that would govern ECOWAS until agreement was reached on the principles and objectives of the organisation, its membership and composition, and its formal structures and constitution. We would then also be in a position to benefit from the experience and recommendations of the various bodies that would administer ECOWAS and from the advice of those who would be responsible for implementing its decisions.

Other criticisms in the CEAO report concerned the provisions made in the ECOWAS Treaty for the poorer states of the region, which were apparently considered inadequate, the level of integration that we were likely to achieve, which was held to be insufficient, and a presumed bias

in favour of political cooperation and expanded trade rather than economic integration in the full sense of the term. With an eye to the poorer and landlocked states, the report claimed that in ECOWAS

The political and commercial aspects appear to be preponderant while the development aspect, which remains the prerogative of any formula of integration and of development is relegated to second place, not to say neglected. The advantages to be had by the States and notably the least favoured ones, do not clearly appear in this Draft Treaty and very often they are only sketched in.

Further provisions of our Treaty that might have benefited the poorer states were dismissed in much the same summary fashion. Thus the references to freedom of movement and residence within the proposed community, which were similar to those already in the CEAO Treaty, were said to give "the impression that the political aspect prevails in the organisation"; while the prospect, under Article 18, of "quantitative restrictions on goods produced in the Community", again raised the question whether "the aim sought is economic unity or a political federation."

Proposals for the development and harmonisation of industries, under Chapter V, were dismissed as "a pure declaration of intention for no means, no mechanism has been envisaged that can oblige member states to put such arrangements into practice." The quite unjustified conclusion of the authors was that "one could believe that the member states are not animated by the desire for cooperation and especially for economic integration."....

The report noted the absence from the Treaty, itself, of any specific community structures charged with promoting the exploitation of natural resources, although here the principle of cooperation was "clearly expressed". Once again, the ECOWAS Treaty was said to compare unfavourably with the more detailed provisions of the CEAO document. As for the harmonisation of economic and fiscal policies, the report commented on the similarity between the Compensation and Development Fund set out in

our Treaty and the CEAO's own Communal Development Fund, both drawing on the experience of other, similar bodies. But our draft Treaty was once more criticised for lack of detail regarding the scale of contributions by member states and the operation and management of the Fund. "Who will be the organiser and where will the fund be deposited?"

The report also predicted difficulties for ECOWAS with regard to the future harmonisation of monetary policy within the community:

Which of course is the ultimate phase of an integration and economic cooperation formula, but it is also the stumbling block because a monetary policy remains, at all times, one of the fundamental attributes of national sovereignty which the States will hardly part with.

70/

It concluded that "the means of reaching this goal as defined by this Treaty is far from being operational and lacks conviction." There was no reference, however, to the fact that CEAO members had, under the terms of the Franc Zone and the West African Monetary Union, long since abdicated effective control of their own monetary policy. We, for our part, were attempting to restore fiscal and monetary powers to the West African states themselves acting through the new community institutions.

The report also wanted more powers for the new supra-national institutions so that they could provide "directives and [impart] some kind of impulsion to the grouping"; although with a certain lack of consistency, the authors had already complained - and rightly - of the problems involved

in attempting to persuade governments to delegate any of their responsibility for determining policy. Some scepticism was expressed about the procedures set out in our Treaty for achieving the elimination of tariff barriers and a common external tariff for the region as a whole within the stipulated period of fifteen years.

There were reservations in the report about the "rules of origin" that would govern products to be exchanged within the Community, while it was claimed that there were no specific procedures for dealing with "the eventual imbalance" that must result from such exchanges. Finally the report noted that there was provision in the Treaty for member states to receive compensation for "loss of rights" or revenues as a result of community decisions, but complained that there was no indication of the basis on which such compensation would be calculated, or the interval that would elapse before it was paid.

The conclusion of the report, prepared for the CEAO Secretariat by an *ad hoc* committee of 'experts', was that:

'The ECOWAS Treaty, short of some details, comes close to that of the UDEAO (The Customs Union of West African States), i.e. a stage which the present members of the CEAO had wanted to surpass in order to launch themselves into an era of harmonised economic development giving the less favoured states all the opportunity to lift themselves to a more advanced level. There is also the fact that several contradictions exist in the text and one wonders whether this is due to translation or if, rather, the Treaty is meant to be ambiguous. Finally, it must be emphasised that the main concern does not appear to be economic promotion of member states but, <sup>71/</sup> more justly, a political and customs association.

Despite these conclusions and the very positive impression which the report conveyed about the level of economic integration already achieved within the CEAO, the Francophone states themselves appeared to believe that ECOWAS had something to offer now and even greater potential in the future.

#### Senghor's Objections Overcome

Our first real indication of the attitude of the Francophone leaders, in conference in Niamey, came when I was advised that the above-mentioned report, which was originally to have been presented to the CEAO Council of Ministers for transmission to the Heads of State, had been withdrawn following the objections of the Togolese observer, who also seems to have had support from Dahomey, likewise represented by an observer, and from Niger. And at the Summit, itself, it was interesting to note that other Francophone leaders, notably President Seyni Kountché of Niger - in keeping with that country's previous, well-known stand - impressed upon the Senegalese leader the necessity for joining ECOWAS, *en bloc*, while persisting with the CEAO.

Senghor, who was elected Chairman of the CEAO at Niamey, attempted yet again to convince his Francophone colleagues to stay away from the Lagos Summit. Rather surprisingly, he remarked that Senegal would have been advised not to have been represented at the Monrovia meeting of West African Ministers, in January, when their delegate had uncritically endorsed each and every decision taken by his colleagues. Even more astonishing was the Senegalese President's claim that it was only after his arrival in Niamey that he had discovered that the real purpose of the Lagos conference was the ceremonial

signing of the draft ECOWAS Treaty, and that there would therefore be little scope for further discussion about the nature and composition of the proposed community. He therefore proposed to be absent from the proceedings.

Senghor's opposition seemed now to be based partly on practical economic grounds - the inconvertibility of currencies between CEAO members and other countries in the region - and partly on political ones : the ECOWAS would be an instrument for the domination of the smaller countries by the larger ones, notably Nigeria. He revealed that he had approached President Mobutu of Zaire about the possible inclusion of that large African state in an expanded Atlantic community, but Mobutu had declined to join a West African grouping for fear his country would be swallowed up by Nigeria. <sup>72/</sup>

Although he was now Chairman of the CEAO, Senghor was increasingly isolated within that organisation on the issue of joining ECOWAS. The final communique emanating from Niamey at the conclusion of the Francophone conference, was a clear and fairly unequivocal expression of support not only for the CEAO but also for a West African regional grouping.

.... the Heads of State, conscious of the progress made by the CEAO, reaffirmed their faith in its future, their determination to make it an efficient instrument of balanced development of the sub-region, of solidarity and shared happiness. Also the Conference drew up measures whose application will place the Organisation in its operational phase....

... the Heads of State solemnly proclaim their desire to achieve, with all Heads of State of the region, a vast Community of West Africa based on effective solidarity among the peoples and on a harmonised and evenly distributed development.

By the end of the CEAO Summit, therefore, Senghor had apparently been prevailed upon to modify his views so far as to agree to attend the forthcoming Lagos Summit, either in person or by means of a representative, and was authorised to approach Eyadema and myself, indirectly, to ask for the meeting to be postponed until June when he would be in a position to attend.

In reply to my earlier invitation of April 8, to attend the Lagos Summit of ECOWAS on May 26-28, Senghor, in his new capacity as Chairman of the CEAO, despatched the following reply dated April 21.

Mr. President and Dear Brother,

I received Your letter of 8th April 1975 which Your personal representative delivered to me.

In my capacity as current Chairman of the West African Economic Community [CEAO], I am informing You that we have all decided to respond to Your invitation to assemble in Lagos during the second half of the month of May. By a telegramme to the other five Heads of State of the CEAO dated today, I am apprising them of the dates of the Ministerial Conference and the Summit Conference.

However, I must emphasise the following : If we agree on the principle of an Economic Community of West Africa which would include English-speaking, French-speaking, Portuguese-speaking and Spanish-speaking elements, we think that the legal texts on which it will be based, should be discussed at length, for as You know, it is a complex problem.

It is therefore not certain that we can sign in May 1975, the Draft Treaty which You submitted to us.

Besides, as I had mentioned in one of my previous letters, I will be in the Americas in the second half of the month of May ... It means that I shall not be able to participate in the conference of Heads of State which is being held in Lagos from 26th to 28th May. However, this will not be a great disadvantage, since I will be represented by Mr. Abdou Diouf, my Prime Minister, who is more competent than I in economic matters.

Democrat that he is, President Senghor had in the end to accede to the deeply felt and vocal wishes of his other colleagues in the CEAO. The reservations that he now expressed in this most recent letter were largely procedural, namely the inclusion of Portuguese and Spanish among the official languages of the proposed community which would entail substantial paper work and translation and would occasion considerable further delay. Portuguese-speaking Guinea-Bissau only became independent after the Lisbon coup of April 25, 1974, while the apparent reference to Spanish-speaking Fernando-Po related to Senghor's concept of an Atlantic Community of African States, rather than our own more modest but more clearly delineated West African regional grouping.

The substance of Senghor's letter reflected the earlier decision of the CEAO leaders to attend our Summit in Lagos; in place of the more sweeping objections that he had previously raised, the Senegalese President seemed now to be asking whether we could delay the Lagos meeting so that he could attend in person - failing which he would send Mr. Diouf. It was impossible, however, for us to postpone the meeting at this late stage, when practically every other leader in the region had indicated support for the proposed date. We had to consider the inevitable disruption that would result. And there was the risk of a possible crisis should Senghor attend and persist with his opposition to the scheme, pursuing diversionary tactics, such as his incorporation of Zaire and other Central African states within the scope of a West African Economic Community. Besides, it was quite clear from the Niamey meeting of the CEAO in April that on this issue Senghor was isolated among the Francophone leaders, not always able to rely even on the support of his most recent comrade-in-arms, Houphouët-Boigny.



Any misgivings I may have had about Senghor's request for a Summit in June rather than May were removed by comments made after the Niamey meeting - in his new capacity of Chairman of the CEAO. Outlining his future proposals for the CEAO he had then indicated that:

.... he would ensure that all the structures of the secretariat are in place, and that the Council of Ministers would meet more often so as to prepare their meeting with other African states, not only of the sub-region but of the region as a whole, since our brothers in Nigeria and Togo have proposed that we participate in a larger community. But at the moment, the Ministers of Finance and of Economic Affairs should meet in Dakar to harmonise their points of view for the Lagos Conference. 75/

As the delegates of the West African countries had already gone to Lomé in December 1973, Accra in March 1974, and Monrovia in January 1975, for the express purpose of harmonising their views, it was difficult to see what positive contribution could be made by the proposed Dakar meeting. Despite Senghor's latest assurances, therefore, I could see little advantage in delaying our long-awaited Summit, particularly as, on this subject, the Senegalese Prime Minister was reported to be less intractable than his leader.

I was due to attend the Commonwealth Conference in Kingston, Jamaica, from April 29 until May 6, 1975, which would be followed by a number of state and official visits to various Caribbean countries. Fortunately, my aircraft was due to refuel at Dakar, en route for Jamaica, and I was therefore able to see President Senghor on April 28 to discuss his latest letter and the issues raised therein. From our discussions, which were cordial, it was soon evident that our viewpoints were not all that dissimilar. Recognising

the importance of the issues to be discussed at Lagos, Senghor wanted a full and open debate, while we, for our part, had consistently favoured a thorough exchange of views as the only means of reaching a viable consensus. Senghor intimated that he would come to Lagos if the conference could be delayed but that otherwise his country would be represented by the Prime Minister. I expressed regret that Senghor might not be able to attend the Summit in person, but outlined the difficulties involved in trying to postpone the meeting, and expressed considerable satisfaction that Senegal would nevertheless be represented.

The matter of the Summit and its timing was now almost settled. In Jamaica I was able to meet the leaders of three other prospective ECOWAS members, Ghana, Sierra Leone and the Gambia. We were agreed that ECOWAS must in the event succeed and took the opportunity to review developments in the region and to prepare our strategy for the Lagos Summit. Meanwhile, before leaving Nigeria, I had issued instructions concerning the detailed arrangements to be made for the forthcoming meetings. And, on May 6, while abroad, I was thus able to approve, sign and despatch individual letters to all the countries in West Africa, thanking their leaders for the cordial reception they had accorded my envoys and the warm hospitality that had been extended to them. I was also able to confirm the dates of the Summit meeting when the proposed Treaty for ECOWAS would be considered and signed.

The Summit, itself, was scheduled for May 26-28, 1975, to be preceded by the Ministerial Meeting on May 23-24. With the letter I enclosed a provisional programme, stressing that the final arrangements would have to be considered and approved by the Heads of State themselves, meeting on May 26.

I also asked for details of their time of arrival and entourage. <sup>76/</sup>

For Presidents Houphouët-Boigny and Senghor, who still found the dates of the meeting inconvenient and who wanted a postponement until June, I dictated a special letter regretting that it was not possible to change times that had been accepted by a majority of the leaders. This letter was then entrusted to the same envoy as before who was given additional verbal instructions.

The relevant paragraphs read as follows:

In response to Your Excellency's wish, my Government has examined the possibility of postponing the meeting till early June, but we have discovered that arrangements have reached such an advanced stage that the dates of the meeting cannot now be changed without causing inconvenience to our Brother Heads of State who have expressed their agreement to the dates proposed.

I would also like to inform you that since the visit of my Envoy to your country, I have heard from His Excellency President Leopold Sedar Senghor of Senegal, with whom I have in fact been in touch. President Senghor has indicated that his prior commitments, which he cannot now conveniently set aside, would render it difficult for him to attend the meeting before the 28th of May, 1975. I have been assured, however, that if President Senghor is unable to attend personally, he would be represented by the Prime Minister of Senegal and other members of his Government. <sup>77/</sup>

I was also able to assure the President of Upper Volta, General Lamizana, that Senegal would participate at the Summit in Lagos and at the preparatory meetings of Ministers and officials.

It is my fervent hope that if further developments in your programme of engagements favour it, it will be possible for Your Excellency to attend the meeting of Heads of State personally, and to send representatives to the preparatory meetings of Ministers. <sup>78/</sup>

In the case of President Senghor, I added expressions of my regret that he would not be with us in Lagos.

.. at this important meeting of the Heads of State of our sub-region. We will very much miss your wide experience and wisdom in our deliberations in our consideration of these most important proposals for our region of Africa. While, however, regretting the fact that Your Excellency will not be able to attend this meeting personally, at the time proposed, we are much gratified to learn that you will probably be represented at the meeting by your distinguished Prime Minister and other members of your Government. We will welcome him to the meeting as your personal representative and as Prime Minister of Senegal.

79/

After these letters were despatched I continued with my state and official visits to Caribbean states, namely Barbados, the Bahamas and Guyana, before returning home via Anguilla and Monrovia, Liberia. By the time I reached Nigeria on May 16, most countries had replied in the affirmative to our invitation to the ECOWAS Summit. President Tolbert of Liberia, whose brother, the Finance Minister, Stephen Tolbert, had been killed in an air crash as recently as May 11, was, most surprisingly but fortunately, able to confirm that he would breach the period of mourning customary in his country to be with us.

I had decided in keeping with our African tradition, to remain on the mat for forty days. But taking everything into consideration and especially in pursuance of our commitment to serve, and, if necessary, even die for the cause of Africa, I have reached a decision to attend the Summit Meeting so as to be by your side during that historic occasion.

80/

Such was the strong sense of commitment to the ECOWAS ideal among the leaders and governments of the region.

There was an equally enthusiastic reply from neighbouring Guinea which, like Liberia, had a long and active tradition of support for regional and African cooperation. The fact that Guinea, unlike Liberia, favoured 'socialist' economic policies showed the ability of ECOWAS to reconcile divergent political traditions and to subordinate ideological considerations to the well-being of the region and Africa as a whole.

The Republic of Guinea which, right from birth, has always worked for the formation of a Regional Grouping and an African Common Market, both of them resolutely anti-imperialist and anti-neocolonialist and seeking to realise the indispensable dignity and happiness of our Peoples...

81/

Our own Federal Executive Council met in the week following my return to Nigeria and approved the memorandum submitted by the Commissioner for Economic Development and Reconstruction, requesting authority to make the necessary administrative arrangements for the Summit and Ministerial meetings, and to expend such moneys as might be required. Most important, the Council

(1) Noted that the Four-Nation Committee appointed by the Second Ministerial Meeting in Monrovia to finalise the Treaty on the Economic Community of West African States for its presentation to the Conference of Heads of State had completed its work.

(2) Noted that fourteen Heads of State in the West African sub-region had been invited to a meeting of Heads of State and Government holding in Lagos on the 26th to the 29th of May, 1975 ...

(6) Approved the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States and mandated the Head of the Federal Military Government to sign it at the meeting mentioned in (2) above.

(7) Authorised the Attorney-General of the Federation to prepare the Instrument of Ratification for signature of the Head of the Federal Military Government without further reference to Council.

82/  
  

Before the Treaty could be ratified, however, it had first to be approved, which was the purpose of the Ministerial and Summit meetings soon to convene in Lagos. Those meetings will themselves be the subject of the next chapter and will be followed by accounts of the establishment of ECOWAS; its institutions, their siting and delegation of the personnel who would be responsible for their smooth operation; and preparation of the various protocols, whose successful implementation would largely determine the ability of ECOWAS to achieve its main objectives.

# REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

1. J.P.Renninger, p.25. After the formation of the CEAO I sent the following message to the Francophone leaders, meeting in Abidjan: "I hope our common efforts will lead to the creation of the West African Community which will transcend all barriers." West Africa, 30 April 1973.
2. Correspondence addressed to West African Heads of State, 11 July 1973.
3. Correspondence addressed to West African Heads of State belonging to the CEAO, 11 July 1973.
4. Colonel I.K.Acheampong, Head of State and Chairman of the National Redemption Council of Ghana, to Head of the Federal Military Government, 18 July 1973 (Ref.:NRC 0109/SF.1); Ahmed Sekou Toure, President of the Republic of Guinea, to Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria, received 29 August 1973.
5. Speech by General E.Eyadema, President of the Republic of Togo, opening the Conference of Ministers summoned to consider the creation of a West African Economic Community, at Lome, 10 December 1973.
6. R.I.Onwuka, Development and Integration in West Africa, p.71.
7. 'Good Prospects for West African Economic Union - Dr. Adedeji', Federal Ministry of Information, Press Release No.1485, Lagos, 15 December 1973.
8. Minutes of the Inter-Ministerial Committee Meeting set up to prepare for the Summit Conference of the Heads of States of the proposed Economic Community of West African States, 22 March 1974.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid . The Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Economic Development and Reconstruction, Economic Affairs Division, was able to advise the Secretary to the Federal Military Government, on 30 March 1974, that "the Government of Niger has agreed to host the above-mentioned [ECOWAS Ministers] meeting from 25th to 30th April 1974, and we have indicated to them that these dates are acceptable to us." My government was advised later that the meeting had been deferred, at the request of the Niger Government, until May, following the coup in Niger. It was again re-scheduled and was expected to begin on 30 July.
12. Brief for the Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria, Ministry of External Affairs, Lagos, 13 July 1974. This was prepared prior to the visit to Nigeria of the Vice-President of Niger.
13. Ibid.

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14. Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Committee set up to prepare for the Summit Conference of the Heads of State of the proposed Economic Community of West African States, 3 April 1975.
15. Correspondence from the Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria to the President of the Republic of Liberia, delivered in person, 14 October 1974, by the Federal Commissioner for Economic Development, Dr. Adedeji.
16. Onwuka, op.cit., pp.73-74.
17. Correspondence from Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria to the President of the Republic of Liberia, 20 January 1975.
18. This and other favourable comments by the Federal Commissioner for Economic Development, contained in his Report to the Federal Military Government of Nigeria, were subsequently included in a letter which I despatched to the other West African Heads of State, on 12 February 1975.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Correspondence from Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, to Colonel Moussa Traoré, President of the Republic of Mali, 12 February, 1975.' &
22. Quoted in Onwuka, p.74.
23. Le Monde, 6 February 1973.
24. West Africa, 12 February 1973.
25. Le Monde, 6 February 1973.
26. West Africa, 12 February 1973. "Rightly or wrongly, Nigeria has chosen the policy of gentle persuasion and friendship as the best way of overcoming these suspicions, and one of the objectives has been the construction of the West African grouping." Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Le Monde, 6 February 1973.
30. West Africa, 12 February 1973.
31. Ibid.
32. The views of the Nigerian Commission for Trade, Mr. Wenike Briggs were cited in Le Monde, 18-19 December 1973. Dr. Arikpo had already made our position clear to M.André Bettencourt, when receiving him at Lagos. Le Monde, 1 February 1973.



REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont.

33. Visiting Cotonou, Dahomey, in March 1973, Dr. Arikpo had maintained that "although the Yaoundé Agreements had given good results, Nigeria did not consider that it was a suitable arrangement for Nigeria or for other African States, and had thus refused to join. He believed that a West African Economic Community should be formed first; then it would be possible to negotiate another agreement with the Europeans on the basis of equality." West Africa, 2 April 1973.
34. West Africa, 9 April 1973.
35. One editor wrote of "the Nigerian 'bomb' in Aura, where the rug was pulled unexpectedly from under the Economic Commission for Africa, which had confidently been expecting to discuss the matter ... " West Africa, 2 April 1973. Again, "the role of the OAU has been the subject of a certain amount of controversy. The organisation was first introduced under pressure from the Anglophone African States who felt strongly that the Yaoundé Convention as it stood had been a divisive factor in Africa, and the entry of Britain into the EEC posed the problem of their own and indeed all Africa's relations with Europe in a direct manner. It was entirely reasonable and comprehensible that they should consider the best forum for it to be discussed was the OAU, even though that organisation had hitherto concerned itself almost exclusively with political matters. Moreover, "over the OAU element which has been introduced it is hard to get rid of however much it may be played down or dismissed as unimportant." West Africa, 15 October 1973
36. West Africa, 15 October 1973.
37. West Africa, 9 April 1973.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. West Africa, 2 April 1973. "We will continue to give Europe the preferences she has enjoyed in our markets, as much for considerations of human dignity as for commercial and juridical reasons." (Senghor), West Africa, 9 April 1973.
41. West Africa, 15 October 1973.
42. Ibid.
43. O.J.B.Ojo, 'Nigeria and the Foundation of ECOWAS', International Organization, 34 (4), Autumn 1980, p.399. "Yet it is outside Africa that the most encouraging development has taken place. If the states negotiating with the EEC in Brussels can develop and maintain the degree of unity which so far has served them so well here, why can the West African states among them not develop even closer cooperation at home? Indeed, such cooperation, in a sense, will be forced upon them, if the industrial cooperation with Europe which is now promised is to have meaning. When the agreement with the EEC is finally signed, that will only be a beginning. West African States must show that the unity developed to face Europe need not evaporate in the face of their problems in Africa itself." West Africa, 28 October 1974.

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44. Le Monde, 11 June 1974.
45. Le Monde, 6 March 1975.
46. Le Monde, 1 June 1974. "One of the pillars of the Gaullist - Foccartian African policy was the maintenance of the unity of the Francophone family at all costs. It was believed that a strong Anglophone-Africa, led by giant Nigeria, was a menace to the much weaker Francophone family; thus the support for the secessionists. To this were, of course, added other motives, notably the desire to participate in Nigeria's oil development. (A. Foccart was considered by all as the man behind France's pro "Biafran" policy. He was said to have encouraged the President of Gabon and the Ivory Coast, closely associated with France and with him personally, to recognise the Secessionist regime." West Africa, 18 November 1974.
47. West Africa, 18 November 1974.
48. Ibid.
49. Dr. Arikpo's visit lasted four days and included a meeting with President Houphouët-Boigny at Yamoussoukro. In 1971, relations between our two countries, broken off in 1968, had been restored at the level of Charge d'Affaires. Now the two foreign ministers agreed to "recommend to their Governments the negotiation of a treaty of friendship and cooperation. They would also suggest the forming of a bilateral committee of experts to examine the possibility of establishing a joint commission of cooperation that would deal with economics, transport, finance, law, politics, culture and agriculture." West Africa, 2 April 1973. Before going to the Ivory Coast, Dr. Arikpo had visited Dahomey and Togo and it was in Lomé, at a meeting of the three foreign ministers, that Dahomey agreed to abolish the transit tax on goods passing through Dahomey from Togo to Nigeria. This was another important step towards ECOWAS. It was also in Dahomey that Dr. Arikpo described as "false and pernicious" the idea that Nigeria's economic and political "weight" could be a threat to its smaller neighbours. "Nigeria is right to promote the creation of a West African Economic Community by fostering the harmonization of roads, telecommunications, maritime links and customs systems". Ibid.
50. West Africa, 27 August 1973.
51. West Africa, 28 October 1974.
52. West Africa, 27 August 1973.
53. West Africa, 28 October 1974.
54. West Africa, 27 August 1973.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.

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57. Correspondence, from Mokhtar Ould Dadah, President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, to Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria, 12 March 1975. Correspondence from Sir Dauda K. Jawara, President of the Republic of Gambia, 13 March 1975.
58. Correspondence from Leopold Sédar Senghor, President of the Republic of Senegal to Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, 5 March 1975.
59. Le Monde, 12-13 January 1975.
60. Ibid. (Congolese Prime Minister in Dakar); Le Monde, 15 August 1974 (OCAM Summit in Bangui).
61. Correspondence from Leopold Sédar Senghor, President of the Republic of Senegal, to Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, 5 March 1975.
62. Ibid.
63. Correspondence from Leopold Sédar Senghor, President of the Republic of Senegal to Head of Federal Military Government, Nigeria, 10 March 1975.
64. Correspondence from Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, to Heads of State of West African Countries, 8 April 1975.
65. Correspondence from W.R. Tolbert, jr., President of the Republic of Liberia, to Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, 18 April 1975.
66. Correspondence from Luiz Cabral, President of the Council of State of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, to Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, 23 April 1975.
67. Le Monde, 18 December 1974; 19 December 1974; 22-23 December 1974; 20 June 1975.
68. "CEAO Summit Conference in Niamey, Monday 7th, Tuesday 8th April 1975." General Lamizana was reported as saying: "I am not at all satisfied with the conference of the CEAO I have just attended at Niamey", Le Monde, 11 April 1975.
69. "A Critical Examination of the Draft Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)," Secretariat General, West African Economic Community (n.d.)
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. Report of Proceedings, CEAO Summit Conference in Niamey, 7-8 April 1975.

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73. Final Communiqué, CEAO Summit Conference in Niamey, 7-8 April 1975.
74. Correspondence from Leopold Sédar Senghor, President of the Republic of Senegal, to Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria, 21 April 1975.
75. Correspondence from the Nigerian Ambassador to Niger, 11 April 1975.
76. Correspondence from the Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria, to Heads of State of West African Countries, 6 May 1975.
77. Correspondence from Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, to Heads of State of the Ivory Coast and Senegal, 6 May 1975.
78. Correspondence from Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, to General Lamizana, President of the Republic of Upper Volta, 6 May 1975.
79. Correspondence from Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, to Leopold Sédar Senghor, President of the Republic of Senegal, 6 May 1975.
80. Correspondence from W.R.Tolbert, jr., President of the Republic of Liberia to Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, 14 May 1975.
81. Correspondence from Ahmed Sékou Touré, President of the Republic of Guinea, to the Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria 17 May 1975.
82. Proceedings, 17th Meeting, Federal Executive Council, Lagos, Nigeria(n.d.) (May 1975), to consider Memorandum by the Commissioner (Minister) for Economic Development and Construction, EC(75) 244, p.13.

CHAPTER 10SIGNATURE AND RATIFICATION OF THE ECOWAS TREATY :  
THE LAGOS SUMMIT

It is my aim in this chapter to provide an account of the Ministerial and Summit meetings that took place in Lagos during May 1975, whose outcome was the signing of the Draft Treaty of the proposed Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). While much of the preparatory work had already been completed, before the Summit, either by the Nigeria-Togo joint working party, or by the various meetings of ministers and experts, or as a result of innumerable talks and discussions with and among the various West African leaders, the Lagos meetings themselves were no mere formality.

The Senegalese attitude had still to be clarified and we were by no means sure of the approach some other Francophone states would adopt. Although there seemed every likelihood that the Community would shortly become a reality, much had still to be decided, including the protocols, the terms of reference of the community institutions and their personnel. It seemed to us best, however, to try to differentiate between these issues and the main business of the conference, which was the creation of ECOWAS : the signing of the Treaty and its early ratification, shortly afterwards, by the required number of states. But we had yet to convince all of our colleagues of the wisdom of this strategy.

On this matter at least the recommendations of the Ministers, following their short meeting in Lagos, were not far from our own point of

view. Nevertheless, previous gatherings of African leaders had more than once declined to accept the advice of their Ministers. The proceedings of the Summit were to that extent unpredictable and therefore extremely important. The speeches themselves provided a useful indication of the preoccupations of individual leaders and gave some idea of the wide range of views and sometimes conflicting priorities that would have to be reconciled if the future of the community was to be assured. Meanwhile much valuable work in this direction was accomplished at the innumerable private meetings and informal deliberations that always accompany such conferences in Africa and elsewhere.

In our conclusion to the chapter we have tried, therefore, to review the more important developments in Lagos from May 23 until May 28, 1975, and to focus on their likely significance for ECOWAS.

### Third Meeting of West African Ministers

Ministers of the fifteen West African States had arrived in Lagos by Thursday, May 22 and met the next day at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, in order to prepare the Agenda for the Summit Meeting of Heads of State. Meeting under the current Chairman, Hon. Mr. Franklin Neal, Minister of Planning and Economy in the Liberian Government, Ministers proceeded to the election of the new Bureau that would be responsible for the subsequent conduct of the conference. <sup>1/</sup>

The Nigerian Commissioner for Economic Development and Reconstruction, Dr. Adebayo Adedeji, was unanimously elected the new Chairman with the Upper Volta Minister of Finance, Colonel Tiemoko Marc

Garango as Vice-Chairman. Dr. Adedeji would prove an astute Chairman in the sometimes difficult discussions that followed while his constant colleague in the preparation and planning of the proposed West African economic grouping, Mr. Edem Kodjo, the Togolese Minister of Finance and Economy, was rightly elected *Rapporteur*.

The real business of the conference then began with an opening address by the new Chairman. After welcoming his colleagues to Lagos, Dr Adedeji proceeded to review the history and development of the proposed Economic Community of West African States, pointing out that on the direction of the Heads of State, Ministers and experts had been meeting over a period of almost three years in order to prepare a Draft Treaty for consideration by their Heads of State. When approved and implemented it would represent the realisation of their aspirations for a regional community that would transcend language and other artificial barriers to inter-state cooperation.

Afterwards the Ministers continued and completed their deliberations on the Draft Treaty itself. Much of the preparatory work of harmonising the French and English texts had already been undertaken and finished by a special committee of experts set up at the previous Monrovia meeting, with representatives from two French and two English speaking countries : Dahomey (Benin) and Togo on the one hand, Liberia and Nigeria on the other. Several amendments to the draft were nevertheless proposed and finally approved by the Ministers. For the most part they arose from criticisms of the draft made earlier by the Secretariat of the CEAO, after a comparison of the treaties of the two organisations.

For reasons that I have explained, the Protocols that would later be embodied in the Draft Treaty, were not yet ready for presentation and discussion, let alone approval. That would require at least a further six to twelve months. There was an attempt at the meeting of Ministers, however, to defer approval of the Treaty until the Protocols themselves had been completed, when both could be considered together. Nigeria and Togo and the great majority of the countries represented were strongly opposed to any such delay which could only imperil the future of the enterprise, and our resistance proved successful in the end.

Some four amendments were carried, one effect of which was to relegate some of the more complex and contentious provisions of the draft to "the Protocols which shall be annexed and which shall form an integral part of the Treaty". A fifth amendment which provoked a lively debate until finally approved, provided in particular that:

This Treaty and the Protocols which shall be annexed and which shall form an integral part of the Treaty shall respectively enter into force provisionally upon the signature of Heads of State and Government and definitively upon ratification by seven signatory states in accordance with the constitutional procedures applicable for each signatory state. 2/

Which did at least ensure that the Treaty could take independent effect, in the temporary absence of the protocols and also pending ratification by the required number of states. Other, less sympathetic amendments were rejected and the meeting concluded by approving the provisional agenda for the Summit and submitting various recommendations for consideration by the Heads of State.



The Ministers determined that it should be left to the Summit to decide which government would act as repository for the Instruments of Accession, once these had been signed by member states as provided for in Article 62. That same government would also be responsible for "the provisional implementation of the Treaty between its signing and the first meeting of the Authority." 3/

While the Ministers could not themselves fix a time-table for ratification, "they nevertheless urged Member States to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible." The inaugural meeting of the Council of Ministers, to be set up under Article 61 of the Treaty, would be held within two months of the Treaty coming into force. It would make "the necessary arrangements for the various protocols and also ... set up various institutions in accordance with the Treaty." Countries which had not by then ratified the Treaty would nevertheless be invited to attend the meeting. 4/

It was also agreed "that international organisations such as [the] Economic Commission for Africa should render assistance to the new Community in preparing the Protocols and carrying out the other studies incidental to its implementation." Finally, the Ministers advised the Heads of State that:

... importance should be attached to the drawing up of the protocols which should be given top priority by the Executive Secretariat of the Community. When those protocols are prepared and are submitted to the Council of Ministers for consideration, those countries in the region that have not yet ratified the Treaty should be invited to participate at the meeting at which the protocols will be considered. 5/

The meeting of Ministers concluded with an expression of their commitment to and optimism concerning the success of the proposed regional community. Those present were aware that this would be Dr. Adedeji's last official assignment before taking up his new appointment as Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). They therefore expressed the warmest appreciation "for the pioneering work he had done in the evolution of the Community and urged him to continue to show interest in the growth of the Community to full maturity." Replying, Dr. Adedeji was able to reassure his colleagues of "the unflinching interest of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria in the Community." 6/

#### Preliminary Meeting of Leaders

It only remained for the first Summit of the West African leaders to consider the recommendations of the Ministers and sign the Treaty establishing ECOWAS. By Monday, May 26, 1975, all had arrived in Lagos and to ensure they were agreed about the programme for the conference and the way that it would approach its task I decided to hold a preliminary and informal meeting of leaders, that same evening. I was still uncertain of the attitude of some of the leaders and plenipotentiaries and, while not wishing in any way to abridge the subsequent debate, I was anxious that the Summit should proceed without interruption to its main business and was therefore prepared to anticipate and, if possible resolve, some of the more delicate questions that might arise.

At our informal gathering I was most gratified to see no less than eleven countries represented by the Head of State, one (Mali) by a Vice-President, two (Guinea and Senegal) by Prime Ministers and one (Ghana) by a Commissioner of Economic Planning. <sup>7/</sup> It was the first time in my experience that such a gathering had assembled in West Africa and the list of those attending is eloquent testimony of the extent of support for ECOWAS.

After a brief welcome, the programme of activities and the provisional agenda were discussed and we had little difficulty reaching agreement on both, with only very minor alterations. As host and chairman it was to be my privilege to make the opening speech of the Summit, with Presidents Eyadema of Togo, and Tolbert of Liberia responding. It was also agreed that, at the end of our formal deliberations, I should make the closing remarks, while one French and one English speaking Head of State would again respond. In the event, Presidents Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast and Dr. Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone were duly nominated for the task. Mr. Luiz Cabral, as Chairman of the Council of State of Guinea-Bissau, the newest state in our region, was invited to reply to my own short address that would be given at the banquet in honour of the visiting delegations. <sup>8/</sup>

With these details settled, we then turned briefly to discuss the Senegalese stand on "the geographical definition of West Africa". They wanted the community to encompass additional African states, further to the East and Southwards along the Atlantic, including the Central African

countries and Zaire. The issue was a potentially divisive one and, in my own view, did not merit the attention it might otherwise receive. Having recently met the leaders of Chad, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea, I was able to assure the West African Heads of State that, while wishing us every success, they had no wish whatever to be part of our proposed community. As for Zaire, it was clear from that government's many public pronouncements that it was trying to create a separate economic community within Central Africa, perhaps linking up with East Africa, but with Zaire as the focal point.

I was convinced, moreover, that only an issue of fundamental principle could be allowed to delay the launching of ECOWAS. What was in debate was not ECOWAS itself, or its present composition, but the limits of its future membership. If the Senegalese merely wanted the door left open for other members to join then that was quite in keeping with our own long-term objective of an African Common Market. It was probable that the success of ECOWAS would one day attract other applicants for membership, just as Britain, Ireland and Denmark had recently entered the EEC. It was therefore agreed that the final communiqué should contain an explicit provision whereby other African countries might be admitted to ECOWAS. 9/

After the vexed question of the protocols, which had yet to be drafted and whose consideration had therefore to be deferred to a later date, and the equally problematic issue of the membership of ECOWAS, which had been resolved in our favour, partly as a result of the negative attitude of the Central and Equatorial African leaders themselves - there remained

the delicate matter of the community's institutions, their location within West Africa, and the nomination and appointment of their officials.

While ready to listen to the views and representations of each and every government of the region, it was our contention that the first priority of this, necessarily short Summit, should be the creation of ECOWAS and the signing of the draft Treaty. The future structures of the Community and their staffing, however, important and relevant, were matters that could more appropriately be considered at a second Summit, which could have more time at its disposal as well as the advice and recommendations of the Council of Ministers. The leaders could then review and approve the institutions and their personnel together with the protocols that would define and regulate their future operation.

Hence the inclusion of a second Summit as an item on the provisional agenda which the leaders were now asked to approve, since we would have, at some point in the conference, to consider both the date and place of the next meeting. This procedure was approved without difficulty, as was the suggestion that Nigeria should be the country to receive the instruments of ratification of the Treaty establishing ECOWAS. <sup>10/</sup>

Throughout the informal meeting, which lasted only an hour and a half, there was an exceptional degree of cooperation and understanding on the part of all the leaders and plenipotentiaries, and agreement was quickly reached on all the matters discussed. Closing the preliminary session I called on those present to display the same fraternal spirit at our meeting the following day so that we might successfully complete our deliberations and on schedule.

### The Summit Opens

On Tuesday, May 27, 1975, the Summit was officially opened at the Federal Palace Hotel, Lagos, with myself in the Chair. It considered and adopted the report of the Second Ministerial Meeting in Monrovia, Liberia, as amended by the Third Meeting of Ministers assembled in Lagos on May 23-26. The provisional agenda, already discussed the previous evening, was likewise approved.

In my opening speech, I took the opportunity, on behalf of Nigeria, to welcome all the participants and visitors to this historic conference and hoped that their deliberations would set West Africa firmly on the road to the fulfilment of the common aspirations of all countries in the region for greater and more effective cooperation. <sup>11/</sup> Such efforts at cooperation would contribute not only to cohesion and prosperity in the region but also to a more progressive and equally prosperous African continent. I pointed out that, despite all the obstacles encountered, the Summit was the culmination of persistent efforts by leaders of all countries in West Africa, past and present, to form a larger economic grouping.

The Governments of this [region] have met, sometimes in smaller or larger numbers, sometimes with representatives from all countries in the area. They have met in various capitals sometimes at the level of Heads of State, sometimes at the level of Ministers or experts. The most significant fact is that in spite of what appeared to be discouraging and even insurmountable obstacles, we have moved along the hard and difficult road to our gathering here today.

Nor were we alone in our action which was "in conformity with the trends which govern the relations of closely connected countries in various regions and various parts of the world." Even the most developed and industrialised nations were themselves forging closer bonds of practical cooperation through larger economic units. The recent Lomé Convention with the EEC was an example of the "mutually advantageous terms" that could be obtained "by a united group of nations from diverse parts of the earth, comprising African, Pacific and Caribbean countries."

The need for economic cooperation in Africa was the more urgent as we had sixteen of the twenty-five countries classified by the United Nations as the least developed in the world. Only economic cooperation would hasten the development of our respective countries and of Africa as a whole. Whatever the initial difficulties, "we must be united in our determination to succeed."

The potential benefits to be derived from economic cooperation were a matter of common knowledge.

We cannot give a boost to inter-African trade, which is at present infinitesimal in global terms, unless we create bigger markets to allow viable and optimum utilization and allocation of our resources.

There was also the problem of ensuring that goods produced locally in our own countries were given preference over foreign goods "produced by the most modern cost-saving equipment and machineries." An economic community would not only accelerate intra-African trade but would also create more job opportunities among all our peoples. "It will be a base on which to build a prosperous and vigorous export trade beyond our own regional frontiers."

No country today, whether developed or developing, could escape from the reality of economic inter-dependence. Hence "the universal trend towards some form of regional economic cooperation and United Nations' support and encouragement for that worthy objective." But we must also be pragmatic and flexible in our approach; pursue objectives "capable of early realisation", and adopt "an open-door policy" that would enable all countries in the region to become members. Arrangements that had proved admirable in the sophisticated economies of the industrialised world were not necessarily those best suited to our own peculiar circumstances.

Our economic community would be a living organism "evolving in its own unique way and growing over the years."

Pragmatism is, indeed, a word enshrined in the treaty. By providing a flexible and working instrument able to accommodate all our differences, our doubts, and our reservations, we believe that the treaty has attempted to come to terms with the realities of our [region].

The treaty, for example, took account of the attempts currently being made within the region "to establish tariff preferential zones or economic unions for the mutual benefit of all the participating countries."

The draft treaty takes account of these developments and guarantees their organisational growth, provided such growth does not impede the success of this momentous and exciting adventure on which we are now embarked.



I concluded by appealing for "cooperation and understanding" among member states to assist in the realisation of the community's objectives and hoped that ECOWAS would be "a step towards greater economic integration and cooperation in areas neighbouring to West Africa, and in the continent as a whole."

Indeed, this should be our goal, although prudence and practical realities dictate that the movement towards this ideal must be gradual in order to achieve success.

General Eyadema responded by pointing out that:

...shortly after our independences and while everybody was still under the spell of the euphoria of recovered freedom, it became clearly evident that the survival of our new nations, their affirmation in the international field, their capability to be organised into viable and reliable groupings would partly depend on their ability to take up quickly their major challenge : to win the battle against economic underdevelopment. 12/

Whatever "the differences in approach, even in conception which appeared in the process of economic integration in our region ... actually the goal aimed at was everywhere the same." It was to create a vast community of interests which would transcend the obsolete colonial legacy and cut across geographical and language barriers in order to generate material and moral advantages and ensure a better future in West Africa.

He called on member states to cooperate "in a harmonious development of the economies of our countries" in a region where "smaller states can co-exist within a coherent grouping with bigger states, without

sacrificing anything of their legitimate interests." He advocated tolerance and broad-mindedness in the community where no one would be able to convince the other by trying to impose his own ways but only as a result of a loyal and fraternal dialogue."

Signing the treaty was not an end in itself but "a starting point" towards the construction of "a real and active Community which associates the legitimate concerns of a liberalised trade with the priority development of the member states." The treaty itself should not be regarded as perfect. The protocols had yet to be drafted, which meant that "a big task still lies ahead and our Ministers and experts must tackle it." Although incomplete in that sense, the treaty did, however, provide a more than adequate basis for future cooperation within the region, permitting liberalisation of trade; free movement of persons, goods and capital; harmonisation of industrial development and agricultural policy; and cooperation in monetary and financial fields, in the area of communications and in social and cultural matters.

The Treaty also envisaged a Fund for cooperation, compensation and development. With such wide and generous provisions General Eyadema hoped that ECOWAS would be able to organise "the growth and harmonious development" of all the countries of the region which were not equally endowed and were at different stages of development.

We must therefore see to it that the high ideal which we are trying to translate into fact, should not result in an ill-fated juxtaposition, because commonplace, of producer countries on the one hand and of countries doomed to consume imported goods, be they community goods, on the other hand. That would of course be a great mistake.

ECOWAS would be "an area of concerted development or it will be nothing at all." Hence everyone must be seen to benefit from the new arrangements : including the landlocked countries, those stricken by drought, and those not so favoured as others in the distribution of natural resources, but "rich in human, spiritual and moral potential." However, "the determining factor" in turning ECOWAS into a living reality would be "the political will of West African leaders" and it must be shown through the early ratification of the treaty by the various governments and the completion of the protocols.

A pre-occupation with social and economic development and a clear preference for pragmatic and tangible solutions were perhaps the most notable features of the previous speeches - just as they were central to the one that followed, by President William Tolbert. Despite the recent and tragic loss of his brother in an air accident, he had nevertheless felt compelled to come to Lagos and to attend the Summit in person. And his gesture of solidarity was very much appreciated by all those present. He began by commending Eyadema and myself for our contribution "towards rekindling the flickering flame of economic cooperation among all the States of our [region]." <sup>13/</sup>

The new community must, he insisted, be acceptable to all states in the region and must therefore take

Full account of the interests of the least developed and smaller states [so as] to ensure that they will be adequately protected and [will] not suffer any disadvantage as a result of their membership of the community.

His idea of a "realistic and meaningful cooperation" was one based on

...the reciprocal benefits of trade, the closest possible collaboration of our institutions of development, and the beneficial exploitation of our economic resources and potential.

And it was his conviction that such an approach was "essential" to the success of the community. Moreover, while there were "significant benefits" to be derived "from any economic organisation within our [Region] which cuts across linguistic and cultural barriers as well as national frontiers", he felt that such an organisation should be designed

... to admit the existence of smaller groupings, as, for example, the Organisation of Senegal River States, the Niger Commission and the Mano River Union or the Ghana/Togo Organisation, which complement our actions on the broader level.

The pragmatic approach of the Liberian leader did not, however, preclude the "fervent hope" that the decisions taken at the Summit

... will serve as an expression of our solid political will to blaze a broad trail of vibrant and meaningful economic cooperation and development not only for the benefit of our [Region] but also for the continent of Africa and for our one world.

Nevertheless, while the objectives of the treaty covered a wide range of subjects and areas, the Liberian Government felt that:

... during its initial years, the Community should concentrate on a short list of priorities to occasion tangible results. The choice of these priorities should be governed by the peculiarities of the economies of the countries in our [Region] and the realities of our time.

To achieve their common objectives the Community should accord the utmost priority

... to complementary developments in the areas of infrastructure, human resource, agriculture, transportation, communication and industry,

and to "the removal of existing constraints imposed in these areas by the high cost of energy, and the paucity of trained personnel for the speedy promotion of intra-West African cooperation."

Tolbert concluded with an appeal for unity so that we might hasten our economic development and secure our political sovereignty. The alternative was to "remain divided and continue being exploited." We had all been alerted to the urgent need for concerted action by the global recession and

... the problems of spiralling prices, the international monetary crisis, inadequate and exorbitant development financing, inequitable terms of trade, the energy crisis, and the challenges to create a new economic order.

#### Report of the Ministers Approved

With the formal speeches over the business of the Summit continued, this time in closed session. The first item on the agenda was the report of the recent Third Ministerial Meeting in Lagos, which was introduced by the Chairman of that body, Dr. Adedeji. Consideration of the report soon gave rise to renewed debate over the protocols which had yet to be drafted but which, when approved, would form an integral part of the Treaty. Article 62 of the Treaty, as amended by the Meeting

of Ministers, would permit the Treaty to be approved, signed and ratified and to enter into force in the absence of protocols which would then be considered later and would be subject to separate ratification.

President Lamizana of Upper Volta wanted some clarification of the procedures whereby the Treaty and the protocols were to be ratified. He wanted it made plain that it was the Treaty and not the protocols that they were being asked to sign in Lagos, and that the status of the Treaty would remain provisional until such time as the protocols were also ratified, by seven signatory states. To this end he suggested re-drafting Article 62 to provide that:

This Treaty shall enter into force provisionally upon signature by Heads of State and Government. This Treaty and the protocols which shall be annexed and which shall form an integral part of the Treaty shall respectively enter into force upon ratification by at least seven signatory states in accordance with the constitutional procedure applicable for each signatory state.

14/

Supporting this proposal two Plenipotentiaries further maintained that the protocols should be an integral part of the Treaty since, without them, the institutions of the Community could scarcely operate, let alone achieve their stated objectives.

With the permission of the Chairman, Dr. Adedeji then explained that the intention of Article 62, as amended by the Third Ministerial Meeting, was two-fold:

(1) to provide for the entry into force of the Treaty provisionally after it had been signed by the Heads of State and Government and definitively after it had been ratified by seven Member-States; and

(2) to provide for the way in which the protocols which would be prepared would come into force. The protocols too would enter into force provisionally upon signature and definitively after they had been ratified by seven Member-States.

15/

He understood the amendment proposed by General Lamizana to mean that the Treaty would not enter into force definitively until the protocols had been prepared, approved, signed and ratified.

A Plenipotentiary, who had himself been present at the earlier Meeting of Ministers, then attempted to explain to the assembled leaders the reasons behind this recommendation concerning Article 62. Originally it had been expected that both the Treaty and the protocols to be attached to it would be ready for consideration by Ministers and Heads of State when they met in Lagos. Unfortunately, because of insufficient time and practical difficulties, only the Treaty was available in its final form and it would take another six to twelve months to complete the texts of the various protocols. It also became clear to the Ministers, in the course of their deliberations, that some of the protocols could not be finalised until after the community came into being. 16/

The Ministers had, therefore, recommended that the procedures originally envisaged in Article 62 be changed so as to enable the Treaty to be signed at this, the first Summit, and ratified shortly afterwards - despite

the continuing absence of the protocols. They were well aware, however, of the importance of the protocols and had therefore included a further recommendation to the effect that the protocols be drawn up as soon as possible and be ratified separately according to the procedures laid down for ratification of the Treaty itself.

Although individual leaders expressed some concern that the protocols were not yet available and could not therefore be considered alongside the Treaty, the great majority of participants in the Summit were prepared to accept the recommendations of the Ministers - and to vote the amendment to Article 62, as outlined by Dr. Adedeji, in preference to the later amendment proposed by President Lamézana. By so doing the leaders wished to express their continuing confidence in their Ministers and also their determination to proceed without delay, to the signing of the ECOWAS Treaty. <sup>17/</sup>

President Houphouët-Boigny himself intervened at this delicate stage, to urge acceptance of the Ministers' recommendations on the grounds that all were more or less agreed on the problem and that it was important and necessary that the Treaty should be signed at this Summit Conference. Once that was accomplished, and after the Treaty was ratified, the Provisional Secretariat could then prepare the protocols to be approved and later included in the Annexe to the document. Only when the Treaty and the various protocols giving effect to it had been drafted, approved and ratified, would the survival of the Community be assured. <sup>18/</sup>



There was a further minor amendment proposed by President Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone and readily accepted, which provided for ratification of the Treaty, not by "seven signatory states" but by "at least seven signatory states". The Ministers' Report was then adopted in full and the draft Treaty, as amended, was endorsed. The Summit was agreed that Nigeria should serve as the depository country for the instruments of ratification and would also be responsible, on an *ad hoc* basis, and in association with Togo, for the conduct of the Community's business - pending the establishment of a permanent secretariat. <sup>19/</sup>

The Summit then unanimously approved both the French and English texts of the draft communique and our formal discussions ended on Tuesday May 27. There remained only the last session, scheduled for the next morning, following a reception at Dodan Barracks for the visiting Heads of State and their delegations.

#### Business of Summit Completed

On Wednesday morning, May 28, all the Heads of State and Plenipotentiaries gathered once again in the Federal Palace Hotel to sign both the French and English texts of the Treaty, thereby establishing ECOWAS. Copies of the Treaty, in both languages, were later deposited with the OAU, the United Nations and, of course, the provisional secretariat of our own new Community.

In my closing remarks I described the signing of the Treaty "as an important milestone" in the struggle for economic emancipation in

West Africa, although I was also concerned, as was General Eyadema earlier in the conference, to point out that "the mere signature of this Treaty" would not "by itself solve our many and difficult economic problems for all time." <sup>20/</sup> Indeed,

...despite the long and difficult negotiations which have been carried out by our Ministers and officials over the past three years, one can still say that the more difficult phase of sub-regional cooperation in West Africa still lies in the future.

I was referring of course to the ratification of the Treaty, the establishment of the various organs of the new Community, the drafting and incorporation of the protocols provided for in the Treaty, and the implementation of the work programmes of work to be established in each area of cooperation. And there would always be opposition from "those who do not wish Africa well." In this regard, however, I was confident that we would all

... continue to make a concerted effort to overcome any rear-guard action that may be mounted by internal and external forces hostile to the economic resurrection of our beloved Continent.

It was my hope that ECOWAS, and those responsible for its future, would draw the relevant lessons from other regional economic organisations such as the East African Community (EAC), the Maghreb in North Africa, and the Central African Customs Union (UDEAC). But, "by their very nature the benefits of economic cooperation take some time to materialise" and I counselled patience, confidence in one another and the recognition "at all times that our economic survival lies in our unity of purpose and action."

Not every country would benefit to the same extent from every project or programme of the Community, whilst the contributions that member states would make to the economic and cultural progress of the region would vary in degree as well as in kind. The creation of the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development was meant to ensure "that countries which have lost in one way or the other are equitably compensated."

President Houphouët-Boigny, whose presence at the Summit was unexpected but was much appreciated, was most complimentary in his remarks both about the Conference itself and about Nigeria, the host nation. <sup>21/</sup>  
He spoke of the Summit as "a symbol of courage",

Symbol of a new Africa, enterprising, imaginative, sensible and anxious, under very favourable conditions, to grapple with the problems posed by her rapidly developing economy and changes in social structure; symbol of community of families with common interest and will, fully aware, in these days of uncertainty and selfishness, of the need to evolve broad-based, realistic and organised forms of grouping to promote solidarity.

He expressed satisfaction with the role Nigeria had played in independent Africa and cited, in particular, her contribution to the success of the Lomé Convention, ratified by the EEC and the ACP countries in February 1975.

While her stance has been very impressive, it is worth mentioning that in the area of world regional politics and groupings Nigeria's policy has been very constant and commendable.

Population, financial resources and mineral wealth - all these put together increase your country's chances of becoming one of the new giant countries of the world...

In view of these facts, Mr. Chairman, your government could have been tempted to remain aloof or at least to be ill-disposed to the idea of regional cooperation both in Africa and with Europe...

Instead, through the Lomé Convention, the Nigerian Government had contributed immensely to the formulation and execution of the most recent plans aimed at international and inter-African cooperation.

While, back home in West Africa, Nigeria had once more demonstrated its "great desire for cooperation in Africa".

... by teaming up with your distinguished counterpart of Togo, our friend and brother President Eyadema and inviting us to establish jointly the Economic Community of West African States, the largest regional economic unit in our continent.

He maintained that, by signing the Treaty, all the countries of the region had demonstrated, beyond words, their ability to transcend linguistic - fiscal and cultural barriers - to make history and to participate in the movement for a new economic order. By this action they had ended "the era of bellicose nationalism and verbal warfare" and had "ushered in a new era of regional groupings, fruitful with clairvoyance, highlighting the desire of Africa to liberate herself from economic yokes." He therefore thanked me

... for the opportunity afforded us today by this Treaty to translate into realities one of the most remarkable stages in the construction of this West Africa that is dear to our hearts.

The Ivory Coast President emphasised the urgent need "to elaborate, sign and ratify" the protocols, which were vital to the survival of this young organisation, and he called for a determined show of political will to make our new venture a success.

We are equally conscious of the fact that this multi-national organisation will turn out to be what our political will makes of it; for any substructures or structures, however sound, will serve no useful purpose if they lack that extra force generated by the common will and equal interest.

He cautioned against unrealistic expectations and a desire for quick results and warned that "ECOWAS only becomes a reality when our hopes for a better world have been realised." He then drew our attention to the failure of the recent Paris Conference on Petroleum and Raw Materials, which, he said, came as no surprise to him and was indicative of the selfishness of certain big powers who were concerned only to preserve their numerous and excessive advantages - "sources of discontent, hatred and trouble" - rather than "engage in dialogue on the formulation of a new international economic order based on justice." The lesson was clear. We should rely only on ourselves and not continue to depend on "selfish gestures" by the rich countries, whether disguised as pity or as charity. We should aim too, at "getting to the root causes of our miseries which are of a commercial, economic and fiscal nature."

From what he had seen at the Summit Conference, Houphouët-Boigny concluded that the countries of the region were determined in future to count only on themselves and to work towards more profitable forms of economic cooperation based on a large internal market and the prospect of increased industrialisation throughout the region.

The final response to my closing address was by President Dr. Siaka Stevens, who described the conference as "one of the best" he had attended and went on to compare the circumstances surrounding the creation of ECOWAS with the biblical tale of the fishermen who, having fished all day and far from home, had caught nothing, and returned to harbour disappointed; there, however, they were advised once again to drop their nets and this time succeeded in gathering in a large catch, where they had least expected to find it. <sup>22/</sup>

True, we cannot live in isolation, true, we have to keep in touch with the outside world and we must expect assistance now and again in the international field but it is my view that, in the last analysis, it is only by making full use of the opportunities around us that we can reach the scale of development which our people need.

He further advised that, within the region, efforts should be concentrated on achieving real economic emancipation and transforming the prevailing social and economic structures for the benefit of their people.

I do not think that most of us can get away from the fact that on the attainment of independence, we went on a honeymoon spree of joy and gladness that the Colonial tyrants had at long last been forced to give us our liberty. Little did we realise then that economic independence is the stuff of which real political independence is made.

Having the colonial ties that had linked their countries in the pre-independence period, they were now "forced to think differently and, as a result, we have tried to get together by means of regional [and sub-regional] cooperation." It was his considered view that such bodies as the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Senegal River Union, and the Mano River Union had provided the launching-pad for ECOWAS, and would continue to play a valuable role within the region. Meanwhile it was up to them to make their new union a success since that would attract still more African states. The "super-powers" themselves were "nothing but a grouping together of peoples of different backgrounds and origins" and he advised member states to learn from their example by coming together and cooperating

for the attainment of their common goals. In conclusion he pointed to the need for an energetic secretariat to give the new Community the necessary sense of purpose and direction, to "keep us in constant touch with one another", and to provide members "with the necessary information at the right time."

I had then only to thank all those participating in the Summit and to assure them of our continued cooperation and partnership in the economic endeavours of the region. I reminded the other leaders that the private sectors of our economies also had "vital and vigorous roles to play in our integration efforts", and appealed to them to try to involve their Chambers of Commerce and similar bodies in the process of integration. <sup>23/</sup>  
Such organisations could

... become a more potent force in enlarging the boundaries of effective administrative and commercial cooperation in West Africa so that men, goods and services can move much more freely across our frontiers.

I also urged functionaries of the member countries to redouble their efforts and overcome any remaining obstacles in the speedy implementation of the Treaty. Finally I thanked the officials of the Secretariat for their diligence and the Press for their excellent coverage and the publicity they had given the Summit Conference.

At the end of the conference the customary communiqué was issued on our behalf, by Dr. Adedeji, who was also authorised to give the accompanying press conference. The communiqué itself provided a convenient, if brief summary of the main conclusions of the Summit.

The Heads of State and Government and the Plenipotentiaries affirmed, as their basic aim, the promotion of cooperation and development in all fields of economic activity. In particular, they emphasised the need for cooperation in the field of industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial matters and in social and cultural matters. They were convinced that such a cooperation is essential for the purpose of raising the standard of living of their peoples, of increasing and maintaining economic stability, of fostering closer relations among their countries, and of contributing to the progress and development of the African continent. They also affirmed their determination to make the Community a pragmatic, dynamic and effective institution which would take into account the realities prevailing in member-states.

The Heads of State and Government and Plenipotentiaries recognised the existence of inter-Government organisation and economic groupings within the region. They also expressed satisfaction at the signing of the Treaty which marks the birth of a new era of solidarity in Africa and which is a decisive step forward in the achievement of a wider integration on the African Continent. They affirmed their determination to do all in their power to achieve this goal.

The Heads of State and Government and Plenipotentiaries expressed the wish for the early ratification of the Treaty so that the aims and objectives of the Community could be realised without delay. They recognised the need to accelerate the preparation of the Protocols of implementation of the present Treaty and entrusted the Governments of Nigeria and Togo with the responsibility of taking all necessary measures towards that end. 24/

### Informal Discussions

While the communique marked the end of the formal proceedings it was also the case that before, between and even after the completion of the regular sessions there was a good deal of informal discussion, including meetings between myself and other Heads of State and Plenipotentiaries, whenever it seemed necessary or desirable, either at their request or on my own initiative. Our conversations ranged over a wide



variety of topics, from the affirmation of our common faith in the proposed economic community and its successful establishment, to requests for bi-lateral assistance, or the sale of Nigerian crude oil to be used in a number of West African refineries. President Daddah, of Mauritania, even made representations on behalf of President Siad Barre, of Somalia, for my intervention in the Somali-Ethiopian border dispute - at a time when I was chairman of the OAU Conciliation Committee that was examining the issue.

From the start of the Summit my main preoccupation was with the attitude of some of the Francophone states since I was familiar with the views of the English-speaking countries, many of whose leaders I had recently encountered either at the Commonwealth Conference, in Kingston, Jamaica, or on the return voyage to Nigeria. In any case they had consistently supported the idea of a West African economic community and were unlikely to draw back now that its realisation was so near. The Ivory Coast and Senegal, however, were states that had previously given us some cause for anxiety, but, the unexpected and very welcome presence of President Houphouët-Boigny, in Lagos, was enough to reassure us that the Ivory Coast at least was determined to participate in the new economic community from its inception, no doubt perceiving the advantages that would thereby accrue to the region as a whole, including its Francophone constituents.

Houphouët-Boigny's appearance at the Summit - his presence at such large and comprehensive gatherings was unusual - was itself a sincere and striking tribute to the strength of the ECOWAS ideal, while also

suggesting that the prospect of economic cooperation within the region was no longer a distant dream but was about to become a reality. I was particularly impressed by Houphouët-Boigny's unequivocal support for ECOWAS throughout the proceedings and like other participants in the Summit, I was moved by his very touching speech towards the end of our deliberations. In our private talks he was likewise eloquent about the potential of ECOWAS which, when launched, would constitute the biggest common market in Africa, having the greatest concentration of human and natural resources. <sup>25/</sup>

But their development and exploitation, which he saw as an urgent priority for the new community, would depend on maintaining a climate of peace and stability throughout the region. As in his speech to the conference, he applauded our proposed regional grouping as the best if not the only way of tackling the challenge that the more advanced industrial countries posed to West Africa's development. The successful conclusion of the recent Lome Agreements was a first step in that direction.

It was interesting, too, to have Houphouët-Boigny's views about the problems peculiar to economic groupings which, he maintained, were more difficult to forge than political unions if only because some countries would inevitably expect to benefit greatly from the community, while others, not necessarily the same, would have to contribute disproportionately to its upkeep. On the vital issue of financing the community's activities, he therefore proposed that contributions should be scaled according to the wealth of each country, with the richer states providing

more - and with special provision for financial and technical assistance to the poorest. This would help engender a greater sense of identity and cohesion within the community.

Mere subsidies, however, were inadequate; training schemes to help provide skilled and educated personnel were more useful as they could make a substantial and more lasting contribution to the development of even the poorest economies. With appropriate technology and more intensive exploitation of their resources, countries now considered poor might soon become sufficiently prosperous to be able to make their own independent contribution to the relief of others, less fortunate. Libya, for example, was now among the richest countries where, before, it had long been regarded as one of the poorest and most backward.

Finally, President Houphouët-Boigny assured me that his country's interest in ECOWAS stemmed from the conviction that such groupings were the best way to overcome Africa's present economic difficulties. While the Ivory Coast would therefore participate actively in the affairs of the new community, his government would advance no claim either to the secretariat, or to any of the other posts that would soon have to be filled.

President Senghor's absence from the Summit was, for reasons I have explained, not at all unexpected but we were happy to be able to welcome his Prime Minister, Abdou Diouf, to Lagos. His presence was a reminder that, whatever our recent differences, our two countries remained steadfast in their commitment to the West African ideal. I also had some sympathy with

Diouf's predicament, given the unenviable assignment conferred on him by his leader. Soon after his arrival in Lagos it must have become evident that there was very little, if any, support for Senghor's view of a grouping of African states extending along the Atlantic to Zaire.

It was therefore to the credit of the Senegalese Prime Minister that, having first taken appropriate soundings, he pursued an increasingly conciliatory policy as the conference advanced. In this respect President Ould Daddah, of Mauritania, recounted to me how Senghor had apparently instructed Diouf not to sign the ECOWAS Treaty if the new community did not adopt his own more comprehensive view of its future membership and territorial extent. <sup>26/</sup> When approached by Diouf, Daddah had advised him that no less than fourteen of the fifteen countries present at the Summit would sign the ECOWAS Treaty, irrespective of the Senegalese attitude.

He had warned that not to sign would simply confirm others in the view of Senegalese policy as isolationist rather than integrationist. In any case, he reminded Diouf, President Mobutu of Zaire had himself rejected Senghor's proposed Community of Atlantic African States. Daddah could rightly, therefore, claim some credit for the eventual compromise whereby the Community would remain open to other, unspecified African countries. It was thus that we secured the signature of the Treaty by all present and, even more valuable, the future participation of Senegal in ECOWAS.

President Daddah left me in no doubt about his own enthusiasm concerning the Summit itself and his optimism about the prospects of our new community. He noted the striking change of attitude on the part of the

President of the Ivory Coast, and maintained, very generously, that it was our own patience and understanding that had made this evolution possible. He confirmed that the heated debates among the CEAO states, during their Niamey Summit, had arisen in response to a claim by some that Nigeria would dwarf all others in the proposed regional grouping. Such fears had now been allayed, however, and all members of the smaller Francophone community recognised that to have remained outside the much larger economic grouping would have been a serious error.

I expressed my sincere gratitude to President Daddah for his part in helping us secure the attendance of the CEAO countries at the Lagos Summit, pointing out that his own example in promptly accepting our invitation doubtless influenced the thinking of the other Francophone leaders. He, in turn, informed me that he looked forward to the early and successful completion of the protocols so that the community might quickly become operational.

One of the more gratifying aspects of the Lagos meetings, which incidentally held out considerable promise for the future of our enterprise and for the region as a whole was not only the presence, but also the active cooperation of representatives of several neighbouring states, whose relations in the past had often been marked by tensions and hostility. The participation of the Prime Minister of Guinea, alongside the Prime Minister of Senegal and the President of the Ivory Coast, was itself an auspicious beginning to our joint venture and an additional cause for satisfaction.

President Touré was unable to attend in person, apparently because of an agricultural campaign he was conducting back home, but the Prime Minister, Dr. Lansana Beavogui, recalled the earlier cooperation between Nigeria and Guinea in the context of the earlier and unsuccessful West African Regional Group. <sup>27/</sup> Circumstances, he insisted, were now much more favourable to our enterprise. But there was still need for vigilance as there were always some who were prepared, and even anxious, to undermine the existence of any really independent community. There was a hint of former differences, however, as he noted, with some astonishment, that the sponsors of such a narrow and restrictive organisation as the CEAO were now among those calling for the extension of ECOWAS to Central Africa.

Guinea, for her part, wished to play a full and active part in the operations of our proposed community and was therefore, like other states, interested in our views about the siting of the secretariat and the choice of the various officials. As in similar discussions with other leaders, I pointed out that, from our point of view the important thing at present was to get the Treaty signed and the community established. With regard to the institutions, themselves, the balance of English and French-speaking states would seem to suggest that, if the Secretariat were to be sited in an Anglophone state, then the Secretary-General should perhaps be drawn from a Francophone state. Ideally, each country would nominate and be represented by at least one senior member of the ECOWAS staff and there was no reason why there should not be sufficient senior posts to cover all fifteen member states. Obviously, it was not for us, acting alone, to take such decisions but a broad and representative distribution

of posts would be consistent with our determination that each and every state should be able to participate fully in the work of the organisation and have a real sense of belonging.

A further cause for satisfaction was the presence at the Lagos Summit of the President of Upper Volta and the Vice-President of neighbouring Mali, whose states had so recently been at war with one another. Reasons of health had prevented President Traore from attending in person, but the representatives of both states, by now reconciled, were on speaking terms for the duration of the conference - which had not been the case at the earlier conference of the CEAO in Niamey. The Malian Vice-President even called on General Lamizana in his suite where I was informed by both parties he was courteously received. <sup>28/</sup>

Nigeria had not intervened in the dispute because other states, including Togo and Guinea, were already mediating. But we did appeal to both governments to cooperate fully with the mediators to see that the border dispute was quickly resolved in the interest of peace and development within the region. Without such peace and stability African governments could not ensure the welfare of their people. Nigeria, for example, had taken measures to relieve the suffering of those in the drought-stricken Sahel states, but such assistance was greatly hampered by an absence of cooperation between the governments of the states most directly affected.

The relevance of ECOWAS to the immediate needs of the region and of the states that comprised it became abundantly clear in the course of a conversation with the President of the new state of Guinea-Bissau, so recently liberated from the repressive rule of the Portuguese.<sup>29/</sup> There was widespread disorganisation within the country following a protracted, costly and vicious colonial war, the withdrawal of Portuguese investment and the removal of everything of value. As a consequence Guinea-Bissau, like Guinea before it, had to build up a state apparatus from scratch.

Problems of such imposing magnitude were further aggravated by a major shortfall in food supplies, lack of seeds and implements, a large Liberation Army that could not yet be demobilised for lack of alternative occupations for the soldiers, and a big influx of refugees returning home from neighbouring countries. If, however, the state managed to survive the first two years of independence I was assured that it would then be able to stand firmly on its own feet.

President Luiz Cabral was understandably anxious that, once the ECOWAS Treaty was signed, the protocols should be prepared quickly so that the economic community might become effective. Where his people had cooperated to wrest their independence from the Portuguese, they were now ready to join hands with others in any cooperative endeavour in West Africa - hence their total support for ECOWAS.

Of our more immediate neighbours, the Dahomean President, Mathieu Kérékou, indicated to us that, while his own contribution to the success



of the conference had necessarily been modest, Dahomey had attended to lend its whole support to the undertaking and to prove that it was not one of those countries that were constantly afraid of being swallowed up by Nigeria. <sup>30/</sup> While not himself a racist, Kérékou believed that it was better to be subordinate to an African country than to be subservient to foreigners. He also hoped that Eyadema and myself would be able to persuade any who were still hesitant to play a full part in the affairs of our community.

### Conclusion

Our meeting with President Eyadema, following the Summit, was marked by considerable relief that the various obstacles to ECOWAS had at last been successfully surmounted - to such an extent that those who might have come to Lagos to try to delay implementation of the Treaty and to embarrass its sponsors were convinced long before the end that their suspicions were unfounded and that the new community would indeed accommodate all their aspirations and help them realise at least some of their expectations. <sup>31/</sup> Eyadema recalled how, at the Ministerial meeting, the Togolese delegation had successfully opposed additional amendments that would have considerably delayed implementation of the Treaty.

But this was no time for self-satisfaction and we expressed the hope that our two countries might continue to cooperate to ensure that the draft proposals were presented and approved in the shortest possible time. Provided the ECOWAS Ministers and officials continued to work with

the same speed and efficiency as before the Summit, we were confident that the protocols would be ready for consideration towards the end of the year, when many Heads of State were again expected in Nigeria for the Festival of Black and African Arts.

Others, like President Lamizana, saw it as an outstanding success and added:

If our Lagos Conference was the Symbol of Expression of true solidarity among the people of the region, then it is undoubtedly an important victory for our Continent in its search for Economic independence and constitutes a significant step towards unity.

32/

Messages were received from far and wide, from within as well as outside the region, from Presidents and private individuals who were sincerely delighted with our success and achievements in this respect.

There followed a spate of activity as the various countries got down to the business of ratifying the Treaty. Liberia was the first to ratify. In a Cable dated 30 May 1975, President Tolbert told me that he had on his return to Monrovia set in motion the constitutional process of ratifying the Treaty.<sup>33/</sup> On the 30th May the Liberian Senate gave its advice and consent and ratification of the document could then proceed. Tolbert ratified the document and the Instrument of Ratification was sent to us immediately by Special Mission, in accordance with Article 65 of the Treaty.<sup>34/</sup> Nigeria followed on 2nd of June, with Guinea, Ghana and The Gambia, the Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Dahomey, Sierra Leone, Togo and Niger acting in quick succession. The ECOWAS Treaty came definitively into force within three weeks of signing on 20th June, 1975.

By 22nd July the only countries still outstanding were Mauritania, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Mali. Of these, only Senegal could still be regarded as in any way doubtful. As for Mauritania and Guinea-Bissau, the problem was doubtless one of communication.

Country	Ratification	Deposition of Instrument
1. Liberia	30th May 1975	4 June 1975
2. Nigeria	2nd June 1975	3 June 1975
3. Guinea	5th June 1975	
4. Ghana	6th June 1975	17 June 1975
5. Gambia	6th June 1975	
6. Ivory Coast	12th June 1975	
7. Upper Volta	20th June 1975	
8. Dahomey	24th June 1975	8 July 1975
9. Sierra Leone	26th June 1975	21 July 1975
10. Togo	27th June 1975	17 July 1975
11. Niger	2nd July 1975	7 July 1975

Among the many letters and cables of congratulation that I received, following the conclusion of our Summit, there was one from President Nyerere welcoming the Treaty "as a positive step towards African Unity", and as "a further demonstration of the declared desire of the people of Africa for closer cooperation and integration in accordance with the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity." <sup>35/</sup> It would have been difficult, however, to improve on the sentiments expressed by the President of Rwanda, Major-General H. Juvenal, who so aptly summarised the whole spirit of the ECOWAS movement. He greeted the new Community as:

It is only by uniting our efforts just as you are now doing that African countries will succeed in setting afoot an organisation capable of meeting the challenge of the enemies of this continent. We are optimistic that, in this perspective, the OAU, while drawing its strength and vitality from our different sub-regional organisations, will, in the years to come, become stronger and, thus, attain more realistically and effectively its most immediate objectives, namely, the liberty, solidarity <sup>36/</sup> and fraternity of all African peoples.

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2. Ibid., para.5(e).
3. Ibid., para.7(a)
4. Ibid., para.7(c)
5. Ibid., para.7(e).
6. Ibid., para.8.
7. Minutes, Preliminary Meeting of West African Heads of State and Government, 26 May 1975.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Opening Address, 27 May 1975, as contained in West Africa Finds a New Future. (Speech by Heads of State during the ECOWAS Summit Meeting in Lagos, 27-28 May 1975, pp.3-8.
12. Response by His Excellency, General Gnassingbe Eyadema, President of the Republic of Togo, in West Africa Finds a New Future, pp.9-13.
13. Response by Dr. William R. Tolbert, jr., President of the Republic of Liberia, in West Africa Finds a New Future, pp.14-17.
14. Report of the First Summit Conference of Heads of State and Government to consider and sign the Treaty Establishing the Economic Community of West African States, Lagos, Nigeria, 27-28 May 1975, p.8, para.20.
15. Ibid., p.9, para.22.
16. Ibid., p.10, para.24.
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19. Ibid., p.11, para.27. (Sierra Leone Amendment); p.11, para.29, (Ministers' Report, as amended, is adopted); p.11, para.30 (Nigeria to serve as the depository country.)
20. Closing Remarks, 28 May 1975, in West Africa Finds a New Future, pp.18-20.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont.

21. Response by His Excellency Felix Houphouët-Boigny, President of the Republic of the Ivory Coast, in West Africa Finds a New Future, pp.21-24.
22. Response by His Excellency, Dr. Siaka Stevens, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, in West Africa Finds a New Future, pp.25-27.
23. Speech at the State Banquet given in honour of the Delegates to the First Summit Conference of the ECOWAS countries, 28 May 1975, in West Africa Finds a New Future, pp.30-31.
24. Official Communiqué, Conference of Heads of State and Government of the ECOWAS, 28 May 1975.
25. Minutes of discussions held with His Excellency, President Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, on 26 May 1975.
26. Minutes of discussions held with His Excellency, President Moukhtar Ould Daddah, of Mauritania, on 28 May 1975.
27. Minutes of discussions held with the Prime Minister of Guinea (Dr. Lansana Beavogui) on 27 May 1975.
28. Minutes of discussions held with Major Baba Diarra, Vice President of Mali, on 28 May 1975.
29. Minutes of discussions held with His Excellency, Mr. Luiz Cabral, President of the Council of State of Guinea-Bissau, on 28 May 1975.
30. Minutes of discussions held with His Excellency Mathieu Kérékou, President of the Republic of Dahomey (Benin), on 27 May 1975.
31. Minutes of discussions with His Excellency General Gnassingbe Eyadema, President of the Republic of Togo, on 28 May 1975.
32. Cable to Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, from His Excellency General A.Sangoule Lamizana, President of the Republic of Upper Volta, 31 May 1975.
33. Cable to Head of Federal Military Government, from His Excellency W.R.Tolbert, jr., President of the Republic of Liberia, 30 May 1975.
34. Correspondence to Head of Federal Military Government, from His Excellency, W.R.Tolbert, jr., President of the Republic of Liberia, 31 May 1975.
35. Cable to Head of Federal Military Government of Nigeria, from His Excellency Julius Nyerere, President of the Republic of Tanzania, 31 May 1975.
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PART IV

CHAPTER 11ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ECOWAS INSTITUTIONS

With the ECOWAS Treaty now in force, it only remained for Nigeria and Togo, as co-sponsors of the Community, to draft the relevant protocols and submit them for consideration by the Council of Ministers and the assembled Heads of State and Government. They could then be ratified, using the same procedures as were employed for the Treaty, when they would be incorporated into the Treaty itself. Meanwhile the Community could proceed with the establishment of its institutions which would not only provide a measure of permanence and continuity, but would also furnish the administrative means whereby the terms of the Treaty could be executed.

But in a region as large and complex as ours, political and economic cooperation can never be taken for granted, even in the most promising circumstances. ECOWAS would soon encounter a succession of problems, both procedural and structural, which, coinciding as they did with other political changes within the region, would inevitably delay implementation of the Treaty just as they would seriously impede the operations of the Community and its institutions.

It is not unusual for a community of this size and complexity to encounter difficulties in its formative years. It is always a testing time both for the political leadership of the region and for the (often inexperienced) officials of the new community. What matters in such cases is that member states should manifest the political will to resolve whatever differences may arise and show their determination to subordinate individual interests to the well-being and prosperity of the region as a whole. The leaders, too, must be capable of generating the kind of solutions that are required if the



community is to be preserved intact with its sense of purpose and direction unimpaired.

In the various 'crises' that would punctuate the development of ECOWAS, in the latter part of the 'seventies, the survival of the community itself was never seriously in doubt. There were occasional recriminations among member states, but no defections, and ECOWAS managed, throughout, to retain its substantial advantage over its sub-regional competitors. The consensus that was finally realised at the Lagos Summit, after long and careful preparation, survived and has continued down to the present, notwithstanding the many changes that have intervened both inside and outside the community.

Before resuming our account of ECOWAS and its evolution after May 1975, it is first necessary to examine the Treaty and describe its main provisions, particularly as they relate to the institutions of the Community and to the protocols that would soon regulate its activities.

### The Treaty

With the ratification of the ECOWAS Treaty, all member states undertook to respect the aims and objectives of the community as defined in Article 2 (1).

It shall be the aim of the Community to promote cooperation and development in all fields of economic activity particularly in the fields of industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions and in social and cultural matters for the purpose of raising the standard of living of its peoples, of increasing and maintaining economic stability, of fostering closer relations among its members and of contributing to the progress and development of the African continent.

To this end the Treaty proposed the creation, "by stages", of a common market among its member states. Article 2(2) therefore provides for:

- (a) the elimination as between the member states of customs duties and other charges of equivalent effect in respect of the importation and exportation of goods;
- (b) the abolition of quantitative and administrative restrictions on trade among the member states;
- (c) the establishment of a common customs tariff and a common commercial policy towards third countries;
- (d) the abolition as between member states of the obstacles to the free movement of persons, services and capital;
- (e) the harmonisation of the agricultural policies and the promotion of common projects in the member states notably in the fields of marketing, research and agro-allied industrial enterprises;
- (f) the implementation of schemes for the joint development of transport, communication, energy and other infrastructural facilities as well as the evolution of a common policy in these fields;
- (g) the harmonisation of the economic and industrial policies of the member states and the elimination of disparities in the level of development of member states;
- (h) the harmonisation, required for the proper functioning of the Community, of the monetary policies of the member states;
- (i) the establishment of a Fund for Co-operation, Compensation and Development; and

(j) such other activities calculated to further aims of the Community as the member states may from time to time undertake in common. 2/

These were ambitious goals, particularly for African states with little previous experience of economic cooperation in such areas and exhibiting a formidable array of economic problems and administrative deficiencies. But it was the very scale and nature of the problems that made collective action at this level so very necessary if the states of the region were ever to experience anything approximating development. Nor were the measures proposed in any way utopian or unrealistic. The ECOWAS Treaty offers what has been described as "a practical programme, carefully tailored to the needs and the susceptibilities of the fifteen West African founding states." 3/

The immediate objectives were simple and strictly economic. Member states would gradually eliminate customs and similar duties on trade among themselves and would remove all other restrictions on such trade. They would eventually establish a common tariff and a uniform commercial policy towards the rest of the world. As well as securing free movement of persons there was also provision for the free movement of capital and services. We also envisaged joint development of a wide range of economic facilities and increased cooperation in research and training. And underlining our approach to economic cooperation was the idea that member states, in their relations with one another, would be guided by a friendly 'division of labour' rather than by an exaggerated emphasis on 'economic nationalism'.

In the longer term, cooperation among the West African states was not to be confined to the economic sphere but would also encompass social and cultural affairs. Thus the Preamble to the Treaty includes recognition of the signatories of the "the over-riding need to accelerate, foster and encourage the economic and social development of their states in order to improve the living standards of their peoples"; it calls for "a fair and equitable distribution of the benefits of cooperation among Member States" and reaffirms "as the ultimate objective of their efforts, accelerated and sustained economic development of their states and the creation of a homogeneous society leading to the unity of the countries of West Africa, by the elimination of all types of obstacles to the free movement of goods, capital and persons." <sup>4/</sup>

From this it should be clear that ECOWAS was intended eventually to be much more than a free trade zone, a customs union, a common market, or even an economic union.

If in the formative stage, the political potential of the community was not emphasised, it was nevertheless there. There was no question, for the present, of any member state being asked to sacrifice a substantial part of its sovereignty but there was the opportunity for all citizens of each member state to enlarge their political as well as their economic horizon by becoming "community citizens" - for whom all obstacles to free movement and residence within the Community would gradually be removed. Some claim to have seen in this the germ of "a political union which in the distant future could become the United States of West Africa." <sup>5/</sup>

By the same token the provision in Article 11 for a Community Tribunal to adjudicate disputes among member states arising from the application of the Treaty has been viewed as "an embryo Court of Appeal"

for the region as a whole, <sup>6/</sup> although it is for the Heads of State and Government, themselves, to appoint the members of the Tribunal. The conclusion, afterwards of a Non-Aggression Protocol and discussion of a possible Defence Pact are further indications of the scope for future Community action in this direction.

Such varied goals cannot all be realised at once or even within a relatively short period of time. In June 1975, Dr. Adebayo Adedeji said that he expected ECOWAS to be operational within five years. Some observers, lacking his experience and his grasp of the administrative scale and complexity of the undertaking thought this estimate unnecessarily pessimistic. Others, like President Senghor, maintained that fifteen years was the minimum time needed to complete the harmonisation of the region's economic policy. <sup>7/</sup> He, however, left his audience in no doubt about his immediate preference for the more restricted Francophone grouping, the CEAO, whose objectives were similar to those of ECOWAS but which was building on an older colonial tradition of economic and administrative cooperation.

From the ECOWAS Treaty, itself, it is evident that much thought was expended on the time-table whereby conflicting and discordant policies will one day be harmonised and the obstacles to economic integration reduced and finally removed. Thus member states have some fifteen years in which to phase in a customs union with a common external tariff. But many other less sweeping measures will take effect long before that. Once the Treaty has been in force for two years member states are no longer permitted to impose new import duties or increase existing ones. Thereafter they are committed to reducing them, while;

The Authority may at any time, on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers, decide that any import duties shall be reduced more rapidly or eliminated earlier than is recommended by the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission. 8/

Within two years member states must also begin the removal of internal taxes designed to protect domestic industry and they have only one additional year in which to complete the process. They have eight years to eliminate "progressively" all revenue duties designed to protect domestic goods.

Once the Treaty was ratified member states were committed to a number of important adjustments whose implementation would in the last analysis depend on the degree of mutual understanding and cooperation that they had achieved. Thus each member state:

Shall grant full and unrestricted freedom of transit through its territory of goods proceeding to or from a third country indirectly through that territory to or from other Member States; and such transit shall not be subject to any discrimination, quantitative restrictions, duties or other charges levied on transit. 9/

The signatories also undertook to abolish all obstacles to the freedom of movement and residence within the community of the citizens of member states, while member states;

Shall by agreements with each other exempt Community citizens from holding visitors visas and residence permits and allow them to work and undertake commercial and industrial activities within their territories. 10/

Both of these provisions were the subject of considerable controversy within the Community during the first years of its operation.

### Institutions of the Community

Chapter VI of the Treaty sets out the main institutions of the Community. The principal governing body is the Authority, comprising the Heads of State and Government which "shall be responsible for, and have the general direction and control of the performance of the executive functions of the Community for the progressive development of the Community and the achievement of its aims." <sup>11/</sup> Decisions of the Authority, "shall be binding on all institutions of the Community." It meets at least once a year with a rotating chairmanship and is itself responsible for determining its procedure, including the manner of taking decisions.

The Council of Ministers reviews the operation and development of the Community so as to ensure compliance with the Treaty, and is charged with making recommendations to the Authority on matters of policy aimed at its "efficient and harmonious functioning." <sup>12/</sup> The Council may also give directions to all subordinate institutions of the Community and exercise such other powers and perform such other duties as may be assigned it by the Authority. It consists of two representatives from each member state and meets at least twice a year, including the meeting prior to the annual Summit. Like the Authority the Council is responsible for determining its own procedure.

Article 8 entrusts the day to day conduct of the Community to an Executive Secretary, to be appointed by the Authority for an initial period of four years which can not then be extended beyond a second term. He, in turn, is assisted by two Deputy Executive Secretaries, appointed by the Council of Ministers, and by a Financial Controller and such other officers as the Council may determine. The duties assigned the Executive Secretary are to service and assist the institutions of the Community in the performance of their tasks

to keep the functioning of the Community under continuous examination and, where appropriate, make any necessary representations to the Council of Ministers; to report to all meetings of the Council of Ministers and the Authority on the activities of the Community; and to undertake such further duties, "relating to the aims of the Community", as may be assigned him by the Council of Ministers and "make such proposals thereto as may assist in the efficient and harmonious functioning and development of the Community." <sup>13/</sup>

The appointment of the Executive Secretary and the choice of the Community Headquarters were decisions that, according to Article 61 (1), were to be taken by the Authority at its first meeting following ratification of the Treaty. Such sensitive issues were best resolved by the Heads of State meeting together as soon as possible after the Treaty became effective. The Authority would also decide which African languages, as well as English and French, would receive official status within the Community. Moreover, recruitment to the Secretariat would follow the guidelines contained in the UN Charter to the effect that:

In appointing officers to offices in the Executive Secretariat due regard shall be had, subject to the paramount importance of securing the highest standards of efficiency and technical competence, to the desirability of maintaining an equitable distribution of appointments to such posts among citizens of the Member States.

<sup>14/</sup>

Meanwhile the staff of the Secretariat would have the status of international civil servants and would "owe their loyalty entirely to the Community".



The Treaty also provides in Article 9 for the creation of four technical and specialised commissions, with one representative from each member state, to submit reports and recommendations through the Executive Secretary to the Council of Ministers on matters pertaining to their area of competence. They would be responsible for drawing up and advising on programmes covering the following sectors of policy : Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary Matters and the Settlement of Payments; Industry Agriculture and Natural Resources; Transport, Telecommunications and Energy; and Social and Cultural Affairs. <sup>15/</sup> Article 38 provides for a Committee of West African Central Banks, "for the purpose of overseeing the system of payments within the Community"; it comprises the Governors of the Central Banks of the member states and its recommendations are directed to the Council of Ministers. <sup>16/</sup> A Capital Issues Committee is also designated in Article 39 "for the purpose of ensuring the free flow of capital between the Member States consistent with the objectives of this Treaty." <sup>17/</sup>

One important community institution, of especial significance in a grouping concerned primarily with promoting development within the region, was the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development, whose role is briefly described in chapter XI of the Treaty. Financed largely by the contributions of member states, supplemented by income from community enterprises and receipts and subsidies from other sources, the Fund is intended to finance projects in member states; provide compensation to states that suffer losses either as a result of the location of Community enterprises or as a consequence of the liberalisation of trade within the region; to guarantee foreign investment within the Community in respect of certain approved enterprises; and to "promote development projects in the less developed Member States of the Community." <sup>18/</sup>

In such a vital and sensitive area as the Fund, concerned as it is with achieving an equitable distribution of the costs and benefits of integration, the Treaty (Article 51 (3)) stipulates that its "operation, organisation, management, status" will be the subject of a protocol to be attached to the Treaty at a later date.<sup>19/</sup> Under the terms of this subsequent protocol the Fund was to be administered by a Managing Director, assisted by a Deputy and by six Directors, each responsible for a particular aspect of the Fund's work. Policy would be the responsibility of the Board of Directors, representing the member states and consisting of either the relevant Ministers or of deputies chosen by reason of their "wide experience on economic, financial and banking activities", and appointed on a "permanent" basis so as to provide both expertise and continuity.

It can be seen that every effort was made to secure the operations of the Fund and its Managing Director from undue pressure from any quarter, and to provide some measure of autonomy. This was later to be a source of considerable confusion and a cause of no small embarrassment in so far as the Treaty itself was ambiguous about the precise relationship between the two principal Executive Officers of the Community : the Managing Director of the Fund and the Executive Secretary. The Fund, while it is subject to the decisions of the Authority, and, in some respects, to the Council of Ministers, is only answerable to its own Board of Directors and thus enjoys a considerable degree of discretion.

At the time of his appointment the Managing Director was, however, enjoined to work in close cooperation and harmony with the Executive Secretary and with the other officials of the Community. And Article 8 (9) of the Treaty provides that the Executive Secretary "shall be responsible for the

day to day administration of the community and all its institutions," <sup>20/</sup> although no mention was made of the Fund, I recall it was our definite intention to make the Executive Secretary the spokesman of the Community. Clearly much would depend on the personalities, the style, competence and experience of the chief executive officers, but it was the Executive Secretary who was entrusted with the care of the ECOWAS institutions and, to some extent, with the reputation of the Community.

Preparation of the ECOWAS Protocols : July 1975-November 1976

The major outstanding business of the Community, after May 1975, was the completion and approval of the protocols which alone would make possible the early implementation of the Treaty, but which threatened, meanwhile to provoke considerable debate among the member states. The protocols would determine the nature and size of contributions by member states to the Community budget; the definition of products held to originate within the region and therefore benefiting from the provisions of the Treaty regarding liberalisation of trade; the provision to be made for the re-exportation within the Community of goods originating outside it; the levels of compensation to be provided by the Community and the precise circumstances under which payment might be made; and the detailed arrangements whereby the Fund would be administered. The contentious nature of these issues pointed to the need for separate and more detailed consideration after the Treaty itself was ratified. While the issues

themselves were controversial, however, much of the ground, particularly in the matter of "rules of origin", had already been covered during the negotiation of the Lomé Agreement with the EEC.

Which is why we were confident that agreement on the draft protocols could be quickly reached by delegations from Nigeria and Togo; and that the resulting texts would be ready in time to be submitted to the Ministers and Heads of State, who were expected to reassemble in Lagos towards the end of 1975 for the Festival of Black and African Arts. Once initial agreement on the main political issues was reached in Lagos, in May, the remaining questions, however difficult, could be quickly and amicably resolved.

To us, ECOWAS was no utopia conceived by politicians anxious to distract attention away from their domestic or international problems; nor was it a mere academic exercise designed simply to enliven the discussions of well-disposed economic theorists. Once the protocols were formulated, approved and incorporated in the Treaty ECOWAS would at last be in a position to implement what has been described as its:

Detailed programmes for the introduction of direct commercial competition into the region, the re-orientation of trade preferences towards the West African region and away from other suppliers, and the radical restructuring of the taxation system upon which so many of the smaller states depend.

Political Change in Nigeria : July 1975

Shortly after the successful Lagos Summit, with its endorsement of ECOWAS and the signing of the Treaty, there was a change of government in Nigeria, on July 29, 1975. In other circumstances that might have had very serious consequences for a fledgling community like ours. Fortunately, I had always taken great pains to insist that ECOWAS should not come to be seen as the property of any one state or individual and that the leaders, irrespective of their services to the community, participated in its deliberations as the accredited representatives of their several states.

My colleagues had not to look far for a relevant precedent. Despite the removal of one of the region's more outstanding political figures, Hamani Diori, in April 1974, the incipient community had so far recovered, by January 1975, for its Ministers to be able to assemble in Monrovia for their second and most crucial meeting to date - the last before Lagos. In time, other leaders would resign or be replaced, including Generals Acheampong and Lamizana, and Presidents Tolbert and Senghor. Each, in his own way, made a contribution to the evolution of the Community along with many other distinguished Africans, both before and since.

For myself, I had no wish in July 1975 to disturb the peace and security of my country or to detract in any way from the unity, reconstruction and development that had been the object of all our endeavours. While I wished my successors well in the many and difficult tasks that would

confront them now, I had at the same time done everything possible to ensure that our regional community should survive and flourish irrespective of any changes in its personnel.

There were problems, of course, as a change of government in Nigeria inevitably meant a period of reflection and uncertainty when the new administration re-examined both the priorities and the commitments of its predecessor, while other governments in the region sought assurances that existing obligations would, at the least, be respected. From the viewpoint of ECOWAS, however, it was on balance better that the change should come after the creation of the Community and before it became fully operational. Any disruption in the life of the Community was thereby minimised, while the new administration in Nigeria retained considerable discretion in such vital areas as the staffing, the institutions and the detailed operations of the Community. In that sense it may have been a good time to change gear and try to reach the same destination by a different route or, more accurately, by employing a different kind of approach.

The events covered in this and the remaining chapters relate mainly to the military governments of General Murtala Mohammed and, after February 1976, General Olusegun Obasanjo. During these years I was no longer an active participant in government and policy-making, but remained a keen if not altogether dispassionate observer of African and international affairs. I now had the privilege and the opportunity to be able to reflect on our problems without the relentless pressures of office. But my work and

efforts were always directed with a view to serving my country in my new capacity and to the best of my ability. To this end I have tried to prolong my association with ECOWAS and, by offering here an account of its formation and development, I hope to encourage others to carry the work further so that the Community may soon fulfil the expectations that were held in many different quarters at the time of its inception.

While our own administration had secured the ratification of the Treaty, we had also looked forward to continuing to work closely with the Togolese Government to ensure that the protocols were drafted in good time for consideration by the West African leaders attending the Festival of Black and African Arts and Culture due to be held in Lagos towards the end of 1975. There was a risk that any delay might weaken the consensus achieved at the Lagos meeting, that the sense of momentum would be lost and that the leaders, having once dispersed to their national capitals, would resume their former competition.

Already there had been a slight hiatus in our preparations as a result of the departure of the Nigerian Commissioner for Economic Development, Dr. Adedeji who had left Lagos to take up his new post as Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Such an important cabinet post, with so many and such varied responsibilities, would attract many eligible candidates and a decision could not be taken lightly. I did not see, however, why there should not be preliminary meetings between Nigerian and Togolese officials on the subject of the ECOWAS protocols. Their studies and

proposals could then be considered, at a later stage, by a joint conference of the relevant Ministers. This was the essence of a memorandum approved by the Federal Executive Council on July 24. <sup>22/</sup>

The delegation was due to leave for Lomé on July 28 when it was delayed by a Togolese request for a postponement until Dr. Adedeji's successor had been appointed. Their view was that Ministers from both sides should first agree the guide-lines for the protocols and issue the directives which their officials could then execute. It seemed to be a question of approach, reflecting the different political traditions of the two countries, rather than any more fundamental conflict over policy or even a disagreement as to timing.

It is possible, too, that the Togolese were unhappy with the decision of the Lagos Summit - to the effect that Nigeria should "continue to give attention to ECOWAS matters on an *ad hoc* basis pending the setting up of a permanent secretariat in due course and that Togo should be associated with Nigeria in this matter." Thus Adedeji's departure may have been seen by the Togolese as an opportunity to reverse their subordinate status. Meanwhile, Ghana, which was entrusted with no special role at the Lagos conference, had arranged to hold discussions in Lomé at a Ministerial level on July 30 - also on the subject of the ECOWAS protocols. As relations between Ghana and Togo were very cordial at this time we could not exclude the possibility of an accommodation between the two that would restrict our own political options where the Community was concerned.



Whatever its cause, the delay in completing the protocols was the more unnecessary and irritating, in our view, since most of the issues involved had already been discussed and at considerable length - during the negotiations between the EEC and the ACP countries. Moreover, since the Third Ministerial Meeting, in Lagos, officials, ministers and leaders were all well aware of the protocols that would be required before ECOWAS could be activated. It was largely a matter of agreeing the details and harmonizing the different tasks.

With the change of government in Nigeria some further delays were inevitable as the new administration familiarised itself with the complex and detailed business of government. It is by no means unusual for an incoming team to have initial misgivings and doubts about some of the programmes begun by its predecessor. There is always the temptation to make an immediate and complete break with previous policies in order to discredit the previous administration and legitimise the change. Certainly the impression of at least one West African leader, visiting Lagos in the early days of the new government, was that those then in charge were in no hurry to press on with the construction of ECOWAS. Relations with Togo, in particular, may have suffered because of my long-standing friendship and collaboration with General Eyadema.

Fortunately for our region and for Africa, those doubts and misunderstandings were soon largely dissipated by the visit of General Eyadema to Lagos. Meanwhile other African leaders had also brought home to the Nigerian government the lesson that we had tried for so long to communicate to others : which was that every African and West African country had a stake in the future of ECOWAS and a corresponding commitment to its success. Already, our neighbours, as well as other African countries, and much of the Third World had grasped the full significance of ECOWAS : and they would not allow it to be the victim of changing political fortunes in any one West African state.

In the case of ECOWAS it was difficult, however, for my successors to take up matters exactly where we had left them. In a highly differentiated region such as West Africa, the continuing and close cooperation between Nigeria and Togo, based as it was on mutual confidence and respect, as well as a measure of economic advantage, had been a vital factor in the creation of the Community. It helped bridge the former divide between the Francophone and English-speaking states, and served to reassure the smaller states that cooperation with Nigeria was not only feasible, but was also desirable. The Nigerian-Togo 'axis' was no less important after the Lagos Summit, than before, particularly as the focus switched to potentially more divisive issues, such as implementation of the ECOWAS objectives and the appointment of those who would largely be responsible for its administration.

Aware of the importance to ECOWAS of close cooperation and continuing harmony between Nigeria and Togo, I did everything possible after July 29 to try to ensure that the change of government in Nigeria did not damage relations between the two countries, even declining an offer to take up temporary residence in Togo pending my eventual return to Nigeria. Despite this it may have been difficult, at first, for the new administration in Nigeria to distinguish clearly between my friendship with Eyadema and the essential purpose of our collaboration, which was the wider cause of African and West African economic cooperation. Once this was recognised in Lagos, however, the construction of ECOWAS could proceed.

#### Location and Staffing of ECOWAS Institutions

Before ECOWAS could become fully operational it was necessary not only to complete the protocols but also to establish the Community's

future institutions and to agree the choice of an Executive Secretary and the location of the Secretariat which would also serve as the ECOWAS Headquarters. It is not unusual in such circumstances for the euphoria that accompanies the successful launching of an organisation to be replaced by a more competitive and even aggressive spirit, as states vie with one another to secure some institution that will enhance their influence in the Community, or boost the prestige of their government and its capital. The same rivalry is apparent in the nomination and choice of the officials who will administer the Community's affairs. Such a large and important organisation as ECOWAS was by no means immune from such competition, although considerations of geography and communications did restrict the range of possible sites for the Headquarters while many states had such difficulty finding qualified candidates for their own administration that they were understandably reluctant to second any of them to ECOWAS.

Several states, including Ghana, Togo and Liberia, were already known to be strong candidates either to accommodate the secretariat or to provide its Chief Executive. Long before July 29, I had been approached by various leaders anxious to know of Nigeria's own position in this regard. It had been my considered view that, until the Treaty was finally ratified, all such speculation was necessarily premature, although the Community itself should perhaps begin to review the talent available within the region and to prepare a list of suitable sites for the Headquarters.

Nigeria, obviously had a very strong claim, if she chose to assert it, to one of the principal posts in ECOWAS, or to accommodate any one of the Community's major institutions. However, opinion in the administration was somewhat divided as the Federal Military Government prepared to make public its position. One view was that, as Nigeria would

contribute the greater part of the Community budget and would also bear a high percentage of the administrative cost, it was only appropriate that Lagos should provide the headquarters of the secretariat which would inevitably increase our influence with the Community and with the other member states. The alternative, which was the nomination of a Nigerian as Executive Secretary, would enable us to influence events directly for only a limited period of time, as that official would serve for an initial period of four years with the prospect of only one further term. Once established, the headquarters were unlikely to be removed.

A second view was that Nigeria should aim at securing the office of Executive Secretary, if only because the first incumbent of that post would be well placed to set the pace for the Community's activities and to map out its course of action both in the present and for the future. While a third position was more concerned with Nigeria's image in the region and held that it would be to our long-term advantage to abstain from contesting either the secretaryship or the secretariat. Our influence within the region was already such that we had no cause to concern ourselves with patronage that would add little if anything to our influence, would not materially advance our interests, and might adversely affect our good image, particularly among our partners. If distributed among some of the smaller states in the region, however, it would considerably enhance their international status, would undoubtedly secure their commitment to ECOWAS, and would further allay the old fears of Nigerian domination.

Before leaving office I had discussed these various positions with my Commissioner of External Affairs, Dr. Okoi Arikpo, and we had agreed to the

establishment of an inter-Ministerial Committee to examine and report on the matter. I nevertheless indicated to those concerned that, on balance, I would prefer to have the headquarters of the Secretariat sited in Nigeria, where we could the more effectively observe the community's future development and progress. I was convinced that, if we offered to provide the land and also to build the secretariat, at our own expense, the other possible contenders would probably withdraw in our favour. As for the post of Executive Secretary, every effort must be made to attract a suitable candidate irrespective of nationality. Here nationality was not very important as the post would rotate every eight years, and all countries in the region would therefore have the opportunity to provide administrative leadership for the Community as a whole.

Liberia was the first country to ratify the ECOWAS Treaty, on May 30, and was also the first to lay formal claim to the Headquarters of the new Community, in a letter of August 12 to the new Nigerian Head of State, Brigadier (later General) Murtala Mohammed. It was doubtless that letter which then prompted Nigeria, Togo and other states to register their counter-claims and which inaugurated the scramble for the Headquarters. What ensued was a battle of wits on the part of the claimant states, combining diplomatic finesse with an impressive display of political strength and various attempts at coalition-building. The situation was not, however, always conducive to the kind of cooperation needed if the momentum behind ECOWAS was to be sustained.

President Tolbert's message to the Nigerian leader was brief and to the point:

Pursuant to Liberia's total and steadfast commitment to the realisation of the goals and objectives of ECOWAS, it is with modesty that I am pleased to inform you that the Government and people of Liberia are prepared to offer Monrovia as the Headquarters of the Community. In this connection, the Government of Liberia is prepared to place at the disposal of ECOWAS adequate office accommodation for the location of the Headquarters.

23/

He then listed the specific advantages of Monrovia and Liberia which would qualify them to accommodate the headquarters of the new Community.

Liberia is centrally located between the eastern and western halves of West Africa. We have under construction adequate conference facilities which are scheduled to be completed in February 1977 with villas for Heads of State. Even though there exists in Monrovia adequate hotel accommodation for delegates and conference officials, we are constructing additional facilities.

And, "besides being one of the less expensive countries in West Africa, Liberia has sufficient housing facilities and local supporting staff is in adequate supply." Tolbert despatched his letter by special envoy, "as an indication of the great importance which I attach to this offer to have the ECOWAS Headquarters located in Liberia, and in my effort to solicit your kind, brotherly support..."

Brigadier Mohammed was wisely non-committal at this stage, preferring to postpone any more definite reply until he had first consulted members of his government. Hitherto the new Nigerian administration had exhibited little enthusiasm for a Community that was so closely associated with my own government. On receipt of Tolbert's letter on August 27, however, the Ministry of External Affairs summoned their ambassadors and high commissioners from the ECOWAS countries for discussion and a full and complete examination.

Fortunately, the envoys had been closely associated with the creation of ECOWAS and were well aware of the effort and energy that had already been expended in the cause of West African economic cooperation - just as they were familiar with the case for the Community. It was their advice to the Commissioner and, through him, to the government, that finally convinced the new administration of the relevance and importance of Nigeria's ECOWAS commitments.

It remained only to formulate an appropriate response to the Liberian initiative. And to this *and Mohammed solicited the opinion of* the Commissioner for External Affairs, Colonel J.N.Garba, and that of his department, and the government also had the benefit of advice from Dr.Adedeji. The conclusion of the Ministry was that Nigeria had a choice between "securing the post of the first Executive Secretary of ECOWAS" and "having Lagos as the Headquarters of the Community". Their recommendation, accepted by the government, was "that the balance of advantage clearly lies in having the headquarters of the ECOWAS located in Nigeria." <sup>24/</sup>

The Nigerian case rested mainly on her estimated share of the Community budget, which was one-third of the total. This would be partly off-set by the considerable impact she would make and the continuing influence she would acquire once the headquarters was established in Lagos. It was on the basis of this advice, then, that Mohammed decided to launch a diplomatic campaign throughout the region in support of Nigeria's claim to house the Community Secretariat.

He authorised and signed letters to all the Heads of State and Government in ECOWAS, expounding the Nigerian argument and giving great

emphasis to the offer to provide land, buildings and other facilities for the Secretariat and its staff, without charge to the other governments. Special letters were despatched to the other claimant states, Liberia, Togo and Ghana.

In his official reply, on October 17, to the earlier letter from President Tolbert, Mohammed was careful

To re-assure Your Excellency of Nigeria's continuing interest and total commitment to the ECOWAS and of our preparedness to do everything possible to ensure that our Community takes off to a good start as early as possible in the interest of the social and economic advancement of our peoples in the West African sub-region. 25/

And on the main issue at point, he continued to the effect that:

After careful consideration of the matters pertaining to the ECOWAS and having taken stock of possible demands that would be made on Nigeria to make the ECOWAS a successful instrument for cooperation among West African States, my Government has come to the conclusion that the best role Nigeria can play is to have the Headquarters sited in Nigeria, where the Secretariat will be assured of a good home and of the goodwill of the Government and people of Nigeria. I therefore wish to apprise Your Excellency of Nigeria's wish to provide host facilities for the Headquarters of the Community and to solicit Your Excellency's support for Nigeria when the matter comes up for decision.

Nigeria was not only willing to provide all necessary facilities for the Headquarters, but they would be made available free of charge, including offices and accommodation, while sufficient land was promised for the present and future development of the Community. Pending the construction of the permanent secretariat, a suitable building would be



provided to house the headquarters of the Community. There would be additional residential accommodation for the Executive Secretary and the other staff of the Secretariat and such amenities as would "enable them to perform their duties efficiently and in a congenial atmosphere."

On the delicate matter of Liberia's own prior claim to host the secretariat,

My Government appreciates your kind gesture in proposing the historic city of Monrovia as the site for the Headquarters of the ECOWAS as well as the excellent reasons aduced in Your Excellency's letter in support of Monrovia's claim. I have no doubts whatsoever in my mind as to the merits of your esteemed country's claim for the Headquarters. Apart from the constructive role that Liberia has always played in the advancement of African interests, she has played key roles in the movement for cooperation in West Africa including the current effort to rekindle the flickering flame of economic cooperation in the West African sub-region that has culminated in the signing of the Treaty establishing the ECOWAS.

But considerations of the long-term interests of our peoples, rather than any selfish motives, has made my Government come to the conclusion that the best role Nigeria can play is to provide host facilities for the Headquarters of the ECOWAS. I pray that Your Excellency will be so kind as to support Nigeria's candidature for the Headquarters.

Letters, to much the same effect, were also despatched to the other main contenders for the ECOWAS headquarters, Togo and Ghana, while they and other West African governments were invited to support Nigeria's own unassailable claims, based as they were on the magnanimous offer to bear the full cost of the headquarters and all ancillary services. As evidence of the importance the government attached to the issue, the letters were delivered to the other fourteen states by two special delegations headed by the Commissioners for Economic Development and Health respectively. Beginning on October 23, the operation was to be completed by November 7.

In discussing his proposed tour with reporters, the Commissioner for Health, Colonel Dan Suleiman, announced that he was going "to allay fears that the recent change of government in Nigeria would harm ECOWAS. He would reiterate Nigeria's total support for the grouping, in whose establishment General Gowon was a prime mover, with President Eyadema of Togo." 26/

Shortly before the delegations departed on their mission, a cable was received from the Liberian President acknowledging Mohammed's earlier, non-committal reply, but in terms that left no doubt about Tolbert's conviction that Monrovia should have the headquarters. This was no doubt reinforced by the recollection of his country's previous services to the cause of ECOWAS, not least his generous offer to host the Third Ministerial Meeting, in January 1975, when it had seemed as though our initiative might collapse for lack of a suitable conference site.

Having noted Mohammed's statement of his "continuous interest in the success of ECOWAS and the attainment of its objectives", Tolbert reminded him of Liberia's claim to have the headquarters;

I am confident that your Government and people will always as in the past decide in the best interest of our sub-region which has such a promising future through cooperation and understanding among all its members. You may rest assured, my dear brother, that Liberia will continue to spare no effort to make ECOWAS a reality and contribute to its ultimate success as it is indeed a meaningful instrument for the upliftment, progress and development of our respective peoples and for the promotion<sup>27/</sup> of peace in our own world.

The reply from Brigadier Mohammed was probably as tactful as circumstances would permit. Having acknowledged the contents of the Liberian cable, the Nigerian Head of State took

The opportunity to inform Your Excellency of my desire to send a special envoy on 25th instant to discuss with Your Excellency not only the siting of the headquarters of our community but the whole range of possibilities for transforming our young community into a dynamic instrument for cooperation and development and for ensuring continued growth and stability in West Africa. 28/

But, as we have seen, Liberia was not the only other state in the region interested in playing host to the ECOWAS secretariat. Togo had consistently harboured the ambition to have the headquarters in Lomé, perhaps to strength its new-found role as a centre for international and regional economic organisations. The Lomé Convention, between the EEC and the ACP countries, had been signed there at the beginning of 1975, and the city also housed the West African Development Bank (BOAD), which sought to promote economic development and integration within the region among Francophone countries. As co-sponsor of ECOWAS, with Nigeria, Togo had hoped that we might concede to Lomé the honour of having the Community headquarters, and to that end was prepared to exploit Nigerian sensitivity to the accusation that she was exercising undue influence within the region. It would have been clear to the Nigerian authorities that Togo could not easily be persuaded to reconsider her chance to house the Community headquarters, particularly in view of her special role in the creation of ECOWAS, and her possible Francophone allies.

The issue of the secretariat and its location should have been discussed and settled at the proposed ECOWAS Summit, scheduled for Lagos in November/December 1975, after the leaders had first disposed of the various protocols. That meeting could not now take place, however, because of the change of government in Nigeria. While all these matters had still to be formally considered at the time of the change, in July, the position of the new administration was in no way different from our own. Given my personal friendship with Eyadema - which also extended to the other West African leaders - the issue could doubtless have been settled quickly and amicably and without damaging the basis of trust and mutual confidence on which the Community had been built and would always rest. However, that was no longer feasible after the events of July.

My own short and unofficial visit to Togo, after July 29, where I went in a personal capacity to convey my appreciation to General Eyadema for his many past and present kindnesses, may have been misunderstood or misinterpreted in Lagos. As I have indicated, we always considered our close association with Togo to be an important aspect of cooperation within the region as a whole. However, there are indications from newspaper reports, that relations between Nigeria and Togo became somewhat distant following July 1975 - as indicated by the fact that the visit of a Togolese delegation to Nigeria in the latter part of September 1975, to discuss ECOWAS and other matters, had to be postponed until October 9. However, when the Togolese team arrived in Lagos, led by the Foreign Minister, Ayi Hunledé, relations had evidently improved to the extent that discussions could at last begin on the protocols, while both sides took the opportunity to review an earlier argument whereby "Nigeria is to exchange her crude oil for Togo phosphates." 29/

In his letter to General Eyadema, on October 17, 1975, the Nigerian Head of State could refer to the cordial reception accorded Nigerian envoys in Lomé, earlier in the month, as

A manifestation of the continued brotherly relations existing between our two countries. I wish to re-assure Your Excellency that, notwithstanding any happenings in our two countries, Nigeria will continue to extend her right hand of fellowship to her sister country, Togo, in all our endeavours to pool our resources with a view to promoting development and improving the living standards of our people. 30/-

Mohammed then recalled the decision of the Lagos Summit to entrust the preparations of the protocols to their two countries.

My Government has taken the necessary initiative in consultation with your Government to embark on preparatory work on these protocols; but because of developments of which Your Excellency is aware, it has not been possible for the Ministers of our two countries responsible for economic cooperation to meet with a view to necessary action being taken to prepare the protocols. However, now that things have stabilised, it is my fervent hope that our two Ministers responsible for ECOWAS matters will soon meet to carry out this urgent assignment to which we, the Heads of State in West Africa, attach the utmost significance. By so doing it will be possible for the inaugural meeting of the Council of Ministers to be held in order to carry out the various duties enumerated under Article 61 of the Treaty.

It was perhaps unfortunate, but no doubt unavoidable, that the same letter, inviting the Togolese government to resume joint consultations on the protocols, served also to advise General Eyadema of our strong interest in acquiring the Headquarters of the Community for Lagos, although Togo herself had a direct interest in securing the secretariat for Lome. Togolese ambitions in this matter were brusquely dismissed in terms less sympathetic, in the view of some observers, than those contained in a similar message sent at the same time to President Tolbert.

The Envoys have informed me of Your Excellency's interest in having the Headquarters of the ECOWAS sited in Togo. I have no doubt in my mind as to the merits of your esteemed country to have the Headquarters since your country is a progressive one and has all the potentials for economic development. I also appreciate the valuable role your country played in conjunction with Nigeria to have the ECOWAS established. But considerations of the long-term interests of all our peoples ...

It would certainly be hard to exaggerate the value and importance of the Togolese contribution, in a region where Francophone states outnumbered their English-speaking counterparts, and where there was a long tradition of suspicion between the two, fostered by colonial rulers.

A new meeting of the Nigerian and Togolese delegations was again arranged for February 1976, in Togo, but had once more to be cancelled after the attempted *coup de'état* and the assassination of the Nigerian Head of State on February 13. There was yet another unavoidable delay as the former Chief of Staff (Supreme Headquarters), Lieutenant-General Olusegun Obasanjo, assumed his new duties as Head of State. This seems, nevertheless, to have been the occasion for a rapprochement between the two former allies (Togo and Nigeria) who were able to resume their previous close collaboration - to the benefit of ECOWAS and the region as a whole, to say nothing of their respective peoples.

In a letter of March 17, President Eyadema took the initiative in communicating his views to the new Nigerian administration, taking the opportunity to warn them that disillusionment with the progress of ECOWAS could only serve to strengthen the smaller, sub-regional organisations which had hitherto been on the defensive since the formation of the wider Community.

The numerous tasks which devolved upon You when you assumed the leadership of the affairs of the great sister Country of Nigeria, could have prompted me to delay once again the despatch of this message. Please excuse me.

I wish to refer to our Economic Community of West African States which was established in Lagos, on the 28th of May 1975, after much negotiation the traces of which have still not disappeared. Nigeria and Togo, who are the originators of this economic union, had been entrusted with preparing and submitting to Member-States the Protocols annexed to the Treaty creating the Community and, according to the time-table drawn up, the meeting of Heads of State for the effective take-off of the ECOWAS should be held in the month of May this year.

But, unforeseen circumstances have hitherto delayed the various preparatory meetings of the Summit of the Heads of State at both expert and Ministerial levels.

During this time, some Member-States who for special reasons have been pushed to create a community we did not approve of - because it is contrary to African Unity - are working to strengthen their group, with every risk of dangerously jeopardising the chances of success of the laboriously realised economic union.

I have, in fact, just received from His Excellency President Senghor of Senegal, current Chairman of the Economic Community of West Africa (CEAO) an invitation to attend a forthcoming summit of that organisation.

Faced with such a situation, which calls our own community into question, I am asking for your vigilance, to quickly speed up the work, and facilitate the adoption of the draft-Protocols prepared by my Government and submitted to Your Government, for possible remarks.

The imperialists, who are not in favour of the economic union of all the States of our Sub-region, are working day and night to divide us and our slowness must not be allowed to favour their criminal game.

I therefore count on You so that the meeting of the Heads of State may be held next May as scheduled, which means that the meetings of the experts and Ministers should be held, at the latest, in April.

The Nigerian reply was prompt and affirmative, as revealed by General Obasanjo's letter of April 5:

I have studied your latest correspondence on the important assignment given to our two countries regarding the preparation of Protocols to the ECOWAS Treaty. Before the abortive coup of February 13, 1976, my officials were preparing to travel to Lome to hold consultations with their counterparts on the basis of the two draft protocols prepared by both sides. It was of course impossible at that time for the meeting to take place because of the difficulties in my country.

However, I am happy to inform your Excellency that officials of my Government are now in Lome to discuss the two draft protocols and agree on a joint draft which could be considered shortly at a Ministerial Council meeting.

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The continuing controversy over the location of the ECOWAS Headquarters, and the staffing of its principal offices, had the immediate effect of impeding cooperation between Nigeria and Togo who had together been entrusted, at the Lagos meetings, with the elaboration of the protocols. By delaying the preparation of the protocols the Community, itself, was compelled to mark time, increasing the impatience of the member-states and particularly those who had greatest need of the new Community. But, where the wider grouping had already shown that it was able to survive political change in the largest of its member-states, it was now able to demonstrate sufficient sense of unity and purpose successfully to overcome the internal rivalries that appeared for a time to threaten it.

#### The Approaching Summit

With the growing likelihood of a Summit conference some time in 1976, when the question of the protocols and the location of the secretariat and other institutions would be resolved, there was the additional problem of



a suitable venue for meetings of the Ministers and Heads of State. A formal request by the Togolese to the Federal Military Government to be allowed to host the forthcoming Summit seems to have upset the Nigerian authorities who recommended, instead, that contenders for the Community headquarters should not be eligible to host the conference. The brief dispute involved differences between the relevant Nigerian ministries as well as a potentially more serious dispute between Nigeria and Togo.

Fortunately, the distance between the two sides was at no time so great as to be unbridgeable. Partial agreement was soon reached at a joint meeting in Lomé, at the end of May 1976, when Nigeria announced that she would continue to work for the success of ECOWAS, It recognised the "joint pioneer status" of the two countries in the preparation and elaboration of ECOWAS, and stressed the "special responsibility" of Nigeria and Togo to continue to collaborate so that ECOWAS might become operational in the near future.<sup>33/</sup> Both delegations were agreed that officials and experts of the ECOWAS countries would meet in the Ivory Coast, from May 31 until June 6, 1976, to prepare the final draft of the protocols. Meanwhile Nigeria and Togo would together invite Ghana to host the subsequent Council of Ministers, while the venue for the Summit would be left in abeyance until the Heads of State of the region had themselves been consulted jointly by Nigeria and Togo.

As the Summit approached canvassing continued throughout the region for the privilege of providing the headquarters of the Community, Nigeria's remaining competitors were Liberia and Togo, although Togo had by now emerged as the principal rival, with a possible advantage should the matter come to a vote. Increasingly, therefore, the government in Lagos began to look for a compromise that would not only secure Nigeria's position in the contest for the headquarters, but would also recognise Togo's role and

contribution to the Community. To this end yet another delegation was sent to Lome to try to resolve the stalemate. Its terms of reference were sufficiently broad to enable Lagos and Lomé to coordinate a mutually satisfactory agreement.

In other circumstances a wide-ranging exchange of views of this kind would have seemed an obvious step and one that would doubtless have been taken earlier but, perhaps, for the inexperience of the new Nigerian administration which came to office in July 1975 and the domestic crisis that had confronted it as recently as February 1976. In their commendable zeal to secure the headquarters for Nigeria, at whatever cost, the administration may have neglected other Community institutions whose potential influence was arguably greater than that of the secretariat. It was now recognised in Lagos that there was more to the Community than the location of the headquarters and the appointment of the Executive Secretary. There was, for example, the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development, established under Article 50 of the Treaty, for the purpose of promoting development in the less advanced states of the Community, and of ensuring some balance between the interests of the more prosperous coastal states and the requirements of the poorer land-locked countries.

The outcome of these many overtures between the Nigerian and Togolese governments, in the course of 1976 was a special meeting in the Autumn in Lomé between General Eyadema and the Nigerian Chief of Staff (Supreme Headquarters), Brigadier S.Yar'Adua, when a compromise solution was reached which enabled both countries to agree on a wide range of appointments, locations and other matters affecting ECOWAS. The impasse was finally

resolved in a complex series of arrangements whereby Togo would have the headquarters of the Fund, while Nigeria would provide the headquarters of the Community and accommodation for the Secretariat.

Liberia, the other contestant, was invited to nominate the Managing Director of the Fund, while the Ivory Coast would be asked to supply the first Executive Secretary, even though President Houphouët-Boigny had not lobbied for the post. Other appointments were quickly agreed on and, with this secret agreement between the two original sponsors of the Community, it was then possible to remove all remaining obstacles to the effective establishment of ECOWAS. A subsequent meeting of Togolese and Nigerian officials, after three days of hard bargaining, agreed a formula for the protocols concerning rules of origin, compensation for loss of revenue, and the basis of contributions to the Fund and the Community budget. <sup>34/</sup>

The location of the Community institutions and the appointment of their officials was not the only outstanding business confronting the West African leaders. The institutions would obviously affect the shape of the Community, while the officials would be expected to impress on the organisation their own distinctive style and sense of purpose. But the Community could not become operational without prior agreement on a certain number of protocols.

The five under consideration after the Lagos Summit all concerned crucial areas of the Treaty and involved a definition of "rules of origin" for those goods originating in member-states and permitted to circulate freely within the Community; provision for the re-exportation within ECOWAS of goods imported from third countries; the manner in which the Community would assess the loss of revenue by member states arising from the implementation of its programmes; the procedures that would govern the

the operations of the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development; and the schedule that would determine the contributions by member states to the ECOWAS budget.

The protocols were the sole business of a meeting of experts and officials in Abidjan, the Ivory Coast, held at the beginning of June 1976, and their report was then considered at a Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Community, in Accra, Ghana, at the end of July. Opening proceedings, General Acheampong advised the Ministers to devote more attention to promoting 'horizontal' trade among member-states, as this was the one means whereby they could develop their self-reliance and make their countries more independent. He reminded his audience that

By our signature and subsequent ratification of the treaty, we have raised in our citizens the vision of a vast homogeneous society linked together by a complicated network of roads, connected by a direct, efficient and rational system of telecommunications, enriched by a steady flow of commerce and sustained by common ventures in agriculture, industry, energy, mineral resources, and other fields of economic activity. <sup>35/</sup>

But, he warned, "we cannot afford to blight this vision by delaying the adoption of the necessary instruments for action."

After long discussion and lively debate, all but two of the five protocols were recommended for adoption by the Heads of State. The other two, concerning "rules of origin" for the products of member states, and levels of compensation to be awarded states suffering as a result of Community action, were referred to a subsequent meeting of Ministers, to be held immediately before the conference of Heads of State and Government. <sup>36/</sup>

As at previous meetings, the Ministers were assisted by representatives of the Economic Commission for Africa, although on this occasion there were some objections that both the ECA advisers were from English-speaking states, namely Ghana and Nigeria. Our own Ministry of External Affairs was clearly anxious to have a more representative team advising the next Council meeting, when the remaining protocols would be considered. According to Dr. Adedeji, however, the problem was not one of bias, but stemmed from the absence within the ECA of Francophone officials with the requisite expertise.

The controversy was perhaps unfortunate but should not be allowed to obscure the long and creditable record of the ECA in promoting West African economic cooperation, particularly in the years that elapsed between the meeting in Accra, in 1967, of ministers and plenipotentiaries to sign the articles of association of the proposed West African Regional Group, and the meeting in 1976 of Ministers, gathered in the same city, to consider the protocols that would regulate the activities of ECOWAS. It was appropriate, then, that Dr. Robert Gardiner, Dr. Adedeji's predecessor at the ECA, and now Commissioner for Economic Planning in Ghana, should preside over the Accra deliberations.

In Accra, Nigeria and Togo were mandated to discuss arrangements for the proposed Ministerial and Summit meetings and to finalise all relevant details in consultation with the other member states of the Community. Where the dispute over the siting of the headquarters had delayed agreement on a venue for the forthcoming Summit, the intervening negotiations between Nigeria and Togo, and the resulting compromise proposals, now made it possible for them to propose Lome as the location for both meetings.

Nigeria had already despatched envoys to all countries in the region to obtain their views about the date and venue of the meetings and to solicit their support for the inclusion in the ECOWAS protocols of a non-aggression pact. <sup>37/</sup> This last was seen as a contribution to the peace and stability of the region and an attempt to secure the autonomous development of the states comprising it. Events elsewhere in Africa at this time, to say nothing of our own experience within the region, suggested the wisdom of such an arrangement which had also recommended itself to some of the Francophone states. The envoys were also able to inform the West African leaders that Nigeria and Togo were agreed that the Summit should be held before the end of 1976, by which time they hoped to be in a position to make joint proposals on such issues as the siting of the Community headquarters and the appointment of a secretary-general.

It was, by all reports, a successful mission which prepared the way for the later visit by a joint Nigeria-Togo team to all states in the region with a formal invitation to attend an ECOWAS Summit on November 4-5, in Lome, Togo, to be preceded by a Council of Ministers also meeting in Lome. This second mission, from 22nd to 28th September was led by the Nigerian Federal Commissioner for Special Duties, Mr. Ajose-Adeogun, accompanied by the leader of the Togolese representatives, the Minister for Works and Mines, the Hon. Ayite G. Mivedor. <sup>38/</sup>

On October 13, the joint team was able to report to the Nigerian and Togolese governments that its task had been completed as all member countries had signified their agreement to attend the Summit and, in most cases, to be represented at the highest level. The impression formed by the leader of the joint delegation was one of considerable enthusiasm for ECOWAS throughout the region and, not least, among the Francophone states,

particularly those like Senegal and Mali whose earlier attitude had been lukewarm or ambivalent. <sup>39/</sup>

Even President Senghor, who had hitherto been noticeably reticent about ECOWAS, had promised to be in Lomé, in person, for the Summit and had taken the opportunity to commend the role of Togo and Nigeria who "had done a marvellous job on ECOWAS." Senghor, it was said, "could hardly conceal his pleasure about the mission of the delegation and in consequence threw aside protocol and discussed freely in English." In conclusion he had stressed that "he thought it more and more imperative for African nations to control their own economies and sustain their political independence."

The more favourable attitude displayed by many of the Francophone states may have reflected developments elsewhere in Africa, with evidence of growing involvement by the big powers and their allies, and by the former colonial rulers, but it was doubtless also a product of the wide-ranging and important *modus vivendi* recently concluded between Nigeria and Togo, which held out to the Community the prospect of operations using its institutions and procedures. To capitalise on this new sense of harmony and cooperation and to ensure that the crucial decisions to be taken at Lomé had the widest possible basis of support within the Community, the same envoys were again despatched to those countries whose leaders either had not been available during the earlier tour, or had been uncertain whether they could themselves attend the Summit.

In the case of the Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone the mission now received a definite commitment that the President would himself be present in Lomé for the Summit. And the leader of the mission, Ajose-Adeogun, was again impressed by the more encouraging mood emanating from the Francophone leaders and, on this occasion, from the President of the Ivory Coast. <sup>40/</sup>

Like Senghor, before him, Houphouët-Boigny received the mission without other officials or even Ministers being present. The Ivory Coast had clearly been kept well informed of the progress made in the talks between Nigeria and Togo. Where Eyadema was actively mediating at this time in the recent dispute between the Ivory Coast and Gabon, arising from the latter's decision, in September 1976, to quit OCAM and its threat to withdraw from *Air Afrique*, it is quite possible that Eyadema had also solicited the support of Houphouët-Boigny in obtaining the cooperation of other Francophone states, including Upper Volta, Mali and Senegal, the latter which had expressed certain reservations about ECOWAS at the previous Summit in Lagos.

It was perhaps fortunate that, on the most controversial issues facing the Lomé Summit, the Ivory Coast seemed ready to support the compromise reached between Togo and Nigeria. Where it had been feared that some Francophone states, including Senegal, might object to the choice of Lagos as the site of the Community headquarters, giving as grounds the high cost of living, lack of accommodation, transportation problems and poor communications. Houphouët-Boigny dismissed such reports as unfounded, asserting categorically that he would go along with whatever Nigeria and the Togolese government had agreed. He was also prepared, if asked, to try and find a suitable candidate for Executive Secretary of the Community, although his own country was hard pressed to meet its own requirements for top administrators and specialists. <sup>41/</sup>

Even the protocols, in their revised form seemed to him to present no great difficulties, whether concerning "rules of origin", or the terms of compensation to be offered the less industrialised states. Neither



proposal was new and, in the case of the second, the Sahel states were already being compensated, under existing customs arrangements, for any loss of revenue on goods imported through the Ivory Coast. In an earlier report, Ajose-Adeogun had described Houphouët-Boigny "as an elder statesman, conscious of the interest of his fast-growing industrialised country...." <sup>42/</sup> The latter now took the opportunity of his discussions with the leader of the visiting mission to express his continuing interest in the supply of crude oil from Nigeria, which could then be refined in the Ivory Coast.

When the Council of Ministers of ECOWAS assembled in Lomé, on October 29, 1976, some seventeen months had elapsed since the last Lagos Summit. <sup>43/</sup> The meeting was chaired by the Togolese Foreign Minister, Yao Grunitzky, and the earlier cooperation between Nigeria and Togo continued as every effort was made to confine Council discussions to the matter of the two protocols that were still in dispute after the previous Accra meeting. The Community institutions, their location and staffing, and the Nigerian proposals for a non-aggression pact, were thus deferred for the consideration of the Summit.

The Summit, itself, was opened by General Eyadema and was attended by no less than eleven Heads of State, while the remaining countries were represented by their plenipotentiaries. After months of patient work by the Nigerian and Togolese ministers and officials, the five protocols, as amended by the Council of Ministers at Accra or, more recently, Lomé, were presented for final approval. Only one occasioned serious further debate : the formula for contributions to the organisation's budget. Where the Ministers had proposed that these should be based half on the country's Gross Domestic

Product and half on per capita income, Nigeria, the richest and most populous state in the region, had opposed this, proposing instead a levy one-third of which would be based on GDP, while the remaining two-thirds would be based on per capita income. The complicated formula finally adopted by the Summit, despite some Nigerian opposition, was that the financial budget would each year be assessed on the basis of a coefficient calculated "as one-half of the ratio of the GDP of all member states plus one half of the ratio of the per capita income of each member state to the total per capita income of each member state." <sup>44/</sup> (Table 6).

The remaining protocols, which produced less discussion on this occasion, provided for the creation of a Fund for Cooperation, Development and Compensation; for compensatory payments to reimburse those member states that suffered a loss of income as customs tariffs within the Community were progressively reduced over the ensuing fifteen years; there was provision, too, for the re-export within the Community of goods imported from non-member countries - which some had feared would favour European exporters with long-established African connections - and there was agreement as to the criteria to be applied to which goods were to be defined as products originating in member states.

It was agreed that the headquarters of the Community should be in Lagos and although Senegal was reported to have opposed the choice, "neither she nor any other state made a rival bid to be host to the headquarters", perhaps because such hospitality "could prove expensive". <sup>45/</sup> In any case Nigeria would, under the formula for assessing contributions to the Community

TABLE 6

FUND  
STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBER STATES AS AT NOVEMBER 30, 1978 In US \$  
SITUATION DE CONTRIBUTIONS DES STATS MEMBERS AU 30 NOVEMBRE 1978

Name of Country/ Paye	Ratio %	CONTRIBUTIONS				Total Contributions	Payment/Paiements				Balance Due/Solde Du				Total Due
		Capital	Budget	1977	1978		Capital	Budget	1977	1978	Capital	Budget	1977	1978	
1. BENIN	3.0	1,500,001	26,150	33,011	1,559,162	1,500,001	26,150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. GAMBIA	2.6	1,300,000	22,864	28,610	1,351,274	-	-	-	-	-	1,300,000	22,664	28,610	-	1,351,274
3. GHANA	12.9	6,449,979	112,443	141,949	6,704,371	1,000,000	112,443	-	-	-	5,449,979	-	141,949	-	5,591,928
4. GUINEA (C)	2.9	1,450,097	25,278	31,911	1,507,286	1,450,097	25,278	31,911	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. GUINEA (B)	1.5	750,000	13,075	16,506	779,581	750,000	13,075	-	-	-	-	-	-	16,506	16,506
6. IVORY COAST	13.0	6,499,978	113,315	143,049	6,756,342	6,241,740	113,315	143,049	258,238	-	258,238	-	-	-	258,238
7. LIBERIA	6.7	3,350,000	58,401	73,725	3,482,126	1,067,874	58,401	73,725	2,282,126	-	2,282,126	-	-	-	2,282,126
8. MALI	1.9	950,000	16,561	20,907	987,468	-	-	-	950,000	16,561	1,800,000	-	1,812	-	987,468
9. MAURITANIA	3.6	1,800,000	31,380	39,614	1,870,994	-	31,380	37,802	1,800,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,801,812
10. NIGER	2.1	1,050,000	18,304	23,108	1,091,412	1,050,000	18,304	23,108	3,922,308	-	3,922,308	-	179,879	-	4,102,187
11. NIGERIA	32.8	16,399,945	285,903	360,924	17,046,772	12,477,637	285,903	181,045	1,392,414	-	1,392,414	-	-	-	1,392,414
12. SENEGAL	5.4	2,700,000	47,069	59,420	2,806,489	1,307,586	47,069	59,420	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13. SIERRA LEONE	4.4	2,200,000	38,353	48,417	2,286,770	2,200,000	38,353	48,417	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14. TOGO	3.6	1,800,000	31,380	39,614	1,870,994	1,800,000	31,380	39,614	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15. UPPER VOLTA	2.6	1,300,000	22,664	28,610	1,351,274	250,796	22,664	28,610	1,049,204	-	1,049,204	-	-	-	1,049,204
16. CAPE VERDE	1.0	500,000	8,717	11,003	519,720	250,000	8,717	-	250,000	-	250,000	-	11,003	-	261,003
TOTAL	100.0	50,000,000	871,657	1,100,378	51,972,035	31,345,731	832,432	666,701	18,654,269	39,225	400,666	-	-	-	19,094,160

budget, be defraying something like a third of the cost of the organisation and Nigeria was also in a position to meet unexpected payments and to underwrite any temporary deficits. The Ivory Coast was asked to provide the first Executive Secretary. Lomé would be the headquarters of the Community Fund, whose future significance was only beginning to be realised. Liberia, which was disappointed in its bid for the secretariat and was later a prospective candidate for the headquarters of the Fund, was invited to supply the Managing Director of the Fund. Ghana, meanwhile, with Nigerian support had seen its candidate, Dr. Donkoh Fordwor, elected President of the African Development Bank, in Kinshasa, in May 1976 - after an unsuccessful bid the previous year in Dakar.

As West Africa commented after the Summit:

While the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS is to come from the Ivory Coast, the Managing Director of the Fund will come from Liberia. So, with the exception of Guinea-Bissau, which, one supposes, is little concerned with such matters, all the strands which have come together in ECOWAS are to have their place in the organisation. It would be idle to suppose that at this stage such an organisation could operate on any other basis. But it is to be hoped that the enormous benefits which establishment of this great area of free trade and free movement offers to member states - for some of which it can be said to be essential - will soon transcend such considerations.

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In his closing speech, General Obasanjo paid tribute to Lomé, which had now witnessed the signing of the protocols, to be incorporated in the Treaty, "in which we have recorded, in great detail, the principles for carrying out the objectives of our Organisation." <sup>47/</sup> In congratulating the ministers and officials on their work in preparing the protocols he remarked that, "from personal experience ... the task of producing the Protocols has by

no means been easy." Later in his address he introduced a cautionary note into the proceedings, similar to General Eyadema's warning at the Lagos Summit : that the Treaty, itself, was only a beginning and that the Community was only as strong as the political will supporting it.

It could be a fatal error to under-estimate the immensity and the magnitude of the problems that still lie ahead. The signing of the Treaty and the Protocols is only the beginning of a long and difficult journey to full economic integration of the sub-region, and it must be acknowledged that the Treaty *per se*, however perfect in form, cannot guarantee the achievement of its objectives without the necessary political will on the part of all concerned in its operation.

Obasanjo maintained further that the leaders had

A supreme duty, nonetheless, to succeed in the face of all odds, and not deviate from the goal of economic emancipation for our peoples.

Moreover, he had no doubt that, with unyielding determination, and given the necessary political will, with the steadfast courage of statesmen, ECOWAS shall overcome all obstacles that could arise both now and in the future.

The "resounding success" achieved at Lomé was a consequence of "the statesman-like spirit of compromise," made possible by "the constructive approach" of those involved in the Summit, working "in the truest spirit of African solidarity."

The ECOWAS Summit of Lome, as a result of this general spirit of cooperation, goes down into the records of the birth of our sub-regional Organisation as a turning point in our efforts to get ECOWAS off the ground. The happy outcome of our deliberations is undoubtedly a great achievement for which we all deserve to congratulate ourselves. Furthermore, it has quite clearly confounded the enemies of Africa who have, as usual, viewed with cynicism any possibility of achieving a concrete and positive result at this Summit meeting.

Obasanjo pledged "priority attention" by Nigeria to "all matters of economic, political, and social advancement" affecting "all our African brothers". Although the Nigerian economy had recorded "some improvement" in recent years, they were "very conscious of the fact that our domestic demands on these resources are many and formidable". Nevertheless,

I need hardly emphasise ... our active commitment within the limits of our resources, in the areas of bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation with sister African states. We are consequently irrevocably committed to the success of ECOWAS for the benefit of all our peoples in the sub-region.

The Nigerian authorities were well aware that

Our economic problems cannot be solved in isolation, because our individual national economies are characterised by common problems, indivisible by nature, and requiring common solution through joint efforts.

Finally the Nigerian leader alluded to his country's proposal to include among the protocols of the Community a non-aggression pact, which suggestion had been well received although a decision had been postponed pending more detailed consideration of its final form and content.

Your Excellencies, please permit me at this point in time to reiterate the proposal so generously supported by our brother, President Eyadema, in his opening remarks, about the imperative need to refrain from the use of force in settling our problems, which I personally consider very important to our Community. It seems to me, in this regard, that we have too often permitted avoidable political differences to divert our attention from the desired goal of economic development and cooperation in our sub-region. I believe, therefore, that we should spare no efforts under the auspices of the Community, to stabilise peace and harmony in our sub-region, and to re-affirm our adherence to the Charters of the United Nations Organisation and the Organisation of African Unity on peaceful co-existence among the nations of the world.

I refer, of course, to the proposal to insert a non-aggression clause in the Treaty of ECOWAS. It is, in our view, a proposal that is worthy of early consideration by the High Authority of Heads of State and Government of the ECOWAS, in the interest of lasting peace and security in our sub-region as a solid basis for the economic and social integration of our peoples and our lands.

It would be tantamount to self-deceit to hope for economic and social cooperation and integration, in an atmosphere of disharmony and hostilities in the sub-region.

By February 1977 the Liberian National Assembly had already ratified the draft protocols agreed in Lomé and, as it only required seven member states to ratify before the protocols came into operation, the foundations of ECOWAS could be said to have been well and truly laid. On December 24, a letter to General Obasanjo, from President Houphouët-Boigny advised of the nomination of Aboubakar Diaby Ouattara, presently Regional Director of the International Bank for West Africa, Abidjan, as his country's choice for the post of Executive Secretary of ECOWAS.<sup>48/</sup> On December 27 there was a cable from the President of Liberia nominating Dr. A. Romeo Horton to serve as Managing Director of the ECOWAS Fund for Compensation, Development and Cooperation.<sup>49/</sup> Dr. Horton was President and one of the founders of the

Bank of Liberia; he was also President of the Bankers Association of Liberia, had played an important role in the negotiations leading to the establishment of the African Development Bank, was a former Secretary of Commerce, Industry and Transportation, and, until this appointment, had acted as Dean of the College of Business and Public Administration of the University of Liberia. The two new executive officers both travelled to Lagos on the same flight, to see General Obasanjo, before assuming their respective positions.

It was interesting that both nominees had considerable experience in the field of banking - the more valuable in view of the daunting economic tasks confronting ECOWAS. In his letter Houphouët-Boigny also proposed to circulate the West African leaders with a note on the operation of the *Fonds d'Entraide* of the Council of the Entente, indicating that their long experience in administering this "fund for regional solidarity" could well furnish useful guide-lines for the new Community Fund. <sup>50/</sup>

On December 29 both nominees paid a courtesy visit on the Nigerian Head of State and pledged themselves to do all in their power to achieve the objectives of the Community. General Obasanjo emphasised Nigeria's commitment to the success of ECOWAS and advised the new Secretary-General, the central figure of the Community, of the basic priority to be given such areas as communications, including roads and telecommunications, which were essential to the emergence of an integrated system. Moreover, studies of practical areas of cooperation should be initiated at the earliest opportunity, while Nigeria would render what assistance she could provided it was within her capacity. <sup>51/</sup>



Perhaps perceiving possible difficulties in future, he emphasised to both officers the need to look at the Community as a single and unique body comprising the Secretariat and the Fund, which should function in an atmosphere of exemplary harmony. In the absence of such a rapport the Community might, he warned, be doomed to failure and he concluded with the admonition that "this, therefore, requires direct and constant communication between the two institutions." <sup>52/</sup> Both officers then renewed their assurances of commitment to the new Community while Obasanjo asked them to assume their duties as soon as possible and to try to visit other member states of the organisation before their nominations were announced publicly.

The warnings by the Nigerian Head of State proved to be both accurate and timely, but did not succeed in averting the 'crisis' that would soon paralyze the Community's institutions and delay its effective operation for a further three years. That 'crisis' is the subject of the next chapter.

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3. West Africa, 22 November 1976.
4. Treaty, Preamble.
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8. Treaty, Ch. III, Art.13, Para.4.
9. Treaty, Ch. III; Art.22, Para.3. The Treaty envisaged a free trade area within West Africa, within ten years of the definitive entry into force. Ch.III, Art.13, Para. 2. There was provision, however, under Ch.III, Art.18, Para. 3, for member states to introduce or continue restrictions or prohibitions affecting its applications of security laws and regulations; the control of arms, ammunition etc.; protection from diseases and infection and the protection of public morality; the transfer of gold, silver and precious stones; and the protection of material treasures.
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CHAPTER 12PROBLEMS OF OPERATING THE NEW ECOWAS INSTITUTIONS : 1977-79

Shortly after ECOWAS became fully operational, in 1977, with the ratification of the protocols and the installation of the Executive Secretary and the Managing Director of the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development, the Community was soon faced with a new set of problems involving the Executive Secretariat and the Fund arising out of the relationship between the two most senior officials. Such personal and institutional rivalries are by no means unique to ECOWAS or confined to multinational organisations, but they are likely to assume wider dimensions and a more damaging character in the latter, where there is a premium on voluntary cooperation.

The history of inter-governmental organisations therefore offers innumerable examples of conflicts involving officials and institutions and the governments they are meant to serve, and arising from every conceivable source. Having appointed the chief executive officers the member states usually reserve the right to supervise their activities and to determine the direction and content of Community policies. And yet the dividing line between policy and administration, however important, is exceedingly difficult to draw with any degree of certainty or precision. Nor can it be assumed that there will always be close cooperation among the officials themselves, or the states comprising the Community.

The situation is particularly delicate in organisations like the OAU or ECOWAS, which rely for much of their effectiveness on preserving a broad

consensus of views and conduct among the participating states. ECOWAS does, of course, have the advantage of mobilising a restricted number of states - sixteen after the accession of Cape Verde, in October 1977 - and of acting within a limited area of competence. But even in ECOWAS, which is primarily an economic community, political considerations are likely to be prominent, particularly in the formative years and before governments and their representatives and officials have settled into a more relaxed and confident set of relationships.

The brief, but fairly intense rivalry over the location of the main ECOWAS institutions was indicative of the continuing strength of national sentiment among the governments of the region, and their understandable preoccupation, still, with political sovereignty despite their voluntary commitment to wide-ranging measures of economic integration. There is always the risk that, in such circumstances, the community institutions will not have sufficient autonomy to function effectively or, indeed, at all. Or else, that certain community institutions will become so closely identified with particular national interests as to assume an almost independent existence.

The administrators, themselves, who are expected to serve the wider community, are vulnerable to the accusation that they are unduly sensitive to the interests of the government that nominated them in the first place - and to whom they are often beholden in various other ways. Conversely, that government may itself become critical of the performance of a nominee who has now, perforce, to respond to pressures from other quarters. The problem for the community officials is therefore to avoid giving any impression of divided loyalties as they work to develop their new institutions.

In the short time available they have to adapt their individual style to the new situation, impress their personality on their colleagues and on others with whom they have now to act, assert their authority over their subordinates and establish, as quickly as possible, the basis of an effective but suitable and positive working relationship with their new employers, i.e., the member states of the organisation, but more particularly - although not exclusively - with the government and administration of the host country, where the headquarters of the institution are situated.

It is likely that a country with sufficient influence to attract the headquarters of an inter-state organisation, will also have a strong and abiding interest in the success of the community and in the way it functions, extending perhaps beyond matters of administrative detail to broader considerations of community policy. This may be even more marked in an organisation of relatively few states, than in one of continental dimensions.

Then there are the complex problems of administering a multi-national institution in such a way as to maintain a semblance of cohesion, discipline and efficiency, despite the need for 'balanced' representation at all levels, including the most senior, if only to maintain a semblance of parity among the member-states - and despite their differing levels of organisational competence and educational opportunity.

Other problems, again, stem from the organisational structure of such communities and the delicate relationships within and between the various community institutions. The highest administrative offices within a multi-national community are likely to attract candidates with considerable experience

in the politics and government, or the commerce and administration, of their own countries, and enjoying the confidence of the national leadership. In trying to impress their own personality and style on the community institutions they are open to accusations of exceeding their competence or, even worse, abusing their trust.

There is the frequent problem, too, of trying to coordinate the activities of the various institutions co-habiting within the same community, each of which is subject to different expectations and may therefore be tempted, whether for reasons of survival or of budgetary advantage, to engage in activities that can only be described as 'empire-building'.

The Heads of State and Government are themselves usually the ultimate arbiter of most such quarrels in multi-national communities - pending the establishment of a permanent tribunal with an agreed jurisdiction. But, because of the demands and pressures of high office, they are by definition unable to immerse themselves as completely as they might wish in the day to day affairs of the community for any extended period of time.

They have, therefore, to devolve many of their functions and even some of their responsibilities onto periodic meetings of ministers or other subordinate officials who, in turn, may lack sufficient authority to resolve disputes concerning administrative competencies, and whose efforts, however well-meant, may simply aggravate the problem - if only by delaying the intervention of the government leaders themselves. Alternatively, there is the risk, happily rare, that some of the ministers may themselves be more



concerned to carve out independent spheres of action, removed from the constant oversight of their superiors, than they are to assert the community's authority over its institutions and their chief executives.

The preceding discussion is not to say that ECOWAS was necessarily confronted by all - or even most - of these difficulties once its institutions were activated in 1977. The central issue here was the relationship of the Fund to the Secretariat and the responsibility of the Executive Secretary for the administration of the Community as a whole. But it is in the nature of administrative disputes that, given the opportunity, they will inevitably grow, encompassing a wide range of subsidiary issues and assuming exaggerated proportions as the chief protagonists feel compelled to seek out whatever support is available. As a rule, the longer the dispute continues the more numerous the groups and interests affected and the more difficult it becomes to achieve a successful reconciliation.

This particular dispute was resolved, satisfactorily, after two years and following repeated interventions by the Council of Ministers and individual leaders and, finally, the arbitration of the Heads of State and Government acting as the supreme Authority within the Community. Their involvement was probably unavoidable, given the constitutional ambiguities at the heart of the matter. But the constitutional issues, themselves, were only relevant in so far as their interpretation was contested by officials of contrasting personality, style and approach, seeking to establish a firm administrative base and to impose their authority thereon, and at the same time seeking and finding support within the Community that went far beyond their country of origin.

In concentrating on the central issue, in this chapter, I have also tried to convey some impression of the extent of the dispute, its ramifications and the many attempts to resolve it, so that the appropriate lessons may, hopefully, be drawn. First, however, it is necessary to describe, briefly, the institutions and then the parties to the dispute and the origins of their controversy in so far as these can be ascertained.

### ECOWAS Institutions

As the ECOWAS Treaty became fully operational on March 1, 1977, the Community now had constitutional status and its activities enjoyed legal sanction. Its activities were conducted by the following institutions, provided for in Article 4 of the Treaty, as amended subsequently, on May 28, 1981, by an additional protocol authorising the creation of a Defence Council and Defence Commission:

- (a) The Authority of Heads of State and Government;
- (b) The Council of Ministers;
- (c) The Defence Council;
- (d) The Executive Secretariat;
- (e) The Tribunal of the Community; and
- (f) The following Technical and Specialised Commissions:-
  - (i) The Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission;
  - (ii) The Industry, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Commission;
  - (iii) The Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Commission;
  - (iv) The Social and Cultural Affairs Commission; and, since May 1981,
  - (v) The Defence Commission.  $\frac{1}{-}$

As we have indicated, the Authority was the principal governing institution of the Community, with responsibility for the general direction and control of the executive organs. Meeting at least once a year, with a rotating chairmanship, the decisions and directives of the Authority were binding on all the institutions of the Community. The governments concerned preferred this system to the pattern of supra-national organisation employed elsewhere because it seemed more appropriate in our case, and because in any case, decision-making in 'supra-national' bodies usually requires individual states to approve the more important decisions taken on their behalf. As the final authority in their own countries, the Heads can, if they wish, commit those countries in advance to a particular line of action at their Summit meetings - subject, of course, to endorsement in accordance with the constitutional provisions in force in each state.

The Council of Ministers, meeting at least twice a year, with two representatives from each state, was expected to act as the main link between the Authority and the other institutions of the Community. The Ministers would be in touch with their respective political heads and would be more closely involved in the planning and discussion of Community affairs, working to ensure the harmonious development of the Community and the recognition, by others, of the interests of their own state. At any one time their deliberations were likely to provide a consensus of the views to be found among the various members of the Authority.

The Secretariat was intended to be the main administrative and nerve centre of the Community and without it ECOWAS could not even begin to function effectively. The Executive Secretary, who was the principal executive officer of ECOWAS, was appointed by the Authority, itself, to serve

an initial term of four years, which might be extended for a second term. There was also provision for two Deputy Executive Secretaries, a Financial Controller, and other officers who would later be appointed to the Secretariat by the Council of Ministers. These officials, in the discharge of their duties, owed allegiance to the Community alone.

If the Secretariat was to be responsible for the smooth functioning of the Community's administrative machine, it was essential, firstly, that the Executive Secretary should enjoy the confidence of the member states and, second, that his responsibility for and his authority over the various agencies comprising ECOWAS should be respected by his subordinates and upheld by the Council of Ministers and by the supreme Authority, itself. And it was the question of his authority over one of these agencies, the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development, that was at the centre of a bitter and complicated dispute, from 1977 until 1979, which did much to paralyse the activities of the Community and may even have seemed, at times, to threaten its survival.

#### Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development

Seen from the outset as a subordinate agency, albeit charged with important functions and enjoying a limited autonomy, the Fund was not included among the institutions of the Community, set out in Article 4 of the Treaty and reproduced earlier in this chapter. Given the attention that it received during 1977-79, however, it seems advisable at this point to provide a more detailed account of the Fund and its proposed area of operation. Chapter XI of the Treaty (Articles 50-52) provided for its establishment, while

its detailed operations and structures were later set out in a protocol signed at the Second ECOWAS Summit, in Lomé, in November 1976.<sup>2/</sup> Under the terms of that protocol the purpose of the Fund was to:

- (i) Provide compensation and other forms of assistance to Member States which have suffered losses as a result of the application of the provisions of the Treaty;
- (ii) Provide compensation to Member States which have suffered losses as a result of the location of Community enterprises;
- (iii) Provide grants for financing national or Community research development;
- (iv) Grant loans for feasibility studies and development projects in Member States;
- (v) Guarantee foreign investments made in Member States in respect of enterprises established in pursuance of the provisions of the Treaty on the harmonisation of industrial policies;
- (vi) Provide means to facilitate the sustained mobilisation of internal and external financial resources for the Member States and the Community; and
- (vii) Promote development projects in the less developed Member States (Article 2).

Articles 3 and 4 of the protocol set out details of the two sources of finance available to the Fund and its Directors:

(1) The Ordinary Capital Resources of the Fund from:

- (a) the Capital of the Fund from the contributions of Member States assessed and calculated on a coefficient of one-half of the ratio of Gross Domestic Product of a Member State to the total Gross Domestic Product of all Member States plus one-half of the ratio of the Per Capita Income of all the Member States - both GDP and PCI based on United Nations GDP and Population figures;
- (b) income from enterprises either wholly or partly owned by the Community;

- (c) receipts from bilateral and multilateral sources as well as other foreign sources;
- (d) subsidies and contributions of all kinds and from all sources;
- (e) income derived from loans made from the above mentioned resources or from guarantees given by the Fund;
- (f) borrowing by the Fund; and
- (g) any other source of income received by the Fund which does not form part of its Special Facilities.

(2) Special Facilities from

- (a) funds contributed by Member States as may be determined by the Council for provision of compensation and other forms of assistance to Member States;
- (b) funds accepted by the Fund in any Special Facility;
- (c) funds repaid in respect of loans or guarantees financed from any Special Facility....;
- (d) income derived from operations of the Fund where Special Facility funds are used ... ;
- (e) funds from such sources as the Fund may consider appropriate for the promotion of the purposes of the Fund including compensation to Member States.

Contributions to the Fund by member states were to be made "in specified convertible currency" and the unit of account was the Special Drawing Rights of the International Monetary Fund, or other currency designated by the Council (Article 6). If they felt it desirable, or necessary, the Board of Directors of the Fund might propose an increase in the contributions by member states as well as other methods of increasing the Fund's resources (Article 7). However, those resources were to be used exclusively for the purpose set out in Article 2 of the protocol. Article 10 prescribes the methods of operation of the Fund, while Article 11 defines the limits of those operations, and Article 13 requires the Fund to be guided mainly by sound

banking principles. Other articles set out the terms and conditions for direct loans and guarantees, the scale of commission and fees to be charged, and procedures to be employed in case of default.

To provide for some degree of autonomy, in respect of its technical operations, the Fund has its own Board of Directors, consisting of Ministers from each member state, or an alternate delegate nominated by the state. This Board, which is very similar in composition to the Council of Ministers, is invested with all the powers of the Fund and has the capacity to make regulations as and when required. The Authority, itself, issues only general policy directives to the Board (Article 25). The Directors meet at least once a quarter at the Fund's headquarters, Lomé, where the quorum is two-thirds of the membership; meetings are usually convened by the Managing Director, on the advice of the Chairman of the Board. The chairmanship rotates on an annual basis; each director has a single vote and all issues are decided by simple majority.

The chief executive officer of the Fund is the Managing Director, appointed by the Council of Ministers for a period of four years. He may attend meetings of the Board but has no vote, being mainly responsible for the day to day administration of the Fund, in which task he is assisted by a Deputy Managing Director of the Fund, appointed by the same procedures. The Managing Director is the legal representative of the Fund (Article 28), which has separate legal status, enjoys legal immunity, and has assets that are exempt from all restrictions, regulations and controls, and are not liable to any form of taxation.

Member states are specifically requested to respect the international character of the Fund and to refrain from any attempt to influence its Managing Director or Staff in the discharge of their duties. All employees are reminded that their sole loyalty is to the Community and the Fund (Article 14), while they are expected to avoid any involvement in the politics of member states for the duration of their service with the Community. Conversely, employees are to be protected by the Community from possible pressures emanating from individual member states.

Such injunctions, meant to uphold the international character of the Fund and to ensure the integrity of its staff and operations, were later used by the Managing Director in his own defence during the subsequent dispute between himself and the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS.

#### Initial Concept of the Fund and its Role

That dispute and its repercussions are the principle subjects of this chapter. At the outset no one queries the division of functions between the Secretariat and the Fund, or the wisdom of locating their headquarters in different countries - however close to one another. It had been assumed that the secretariat would be the leading institution and that its incumbent would be the principal administrative officer, responsible for coordinating the operations of the Community as a whole and, as such, answerable to the Council of Ministers and, ultimately, the Authority. The Fund was held to be an important institution, essential to the smooth and successful operation of the Community, but with more limited and specialised functions than the Secretariat. Without continuing



and harmonious cooperation between the two, in the pursuit of common objectives, both long and short term, the Community could hope to achieve very little.

The Fund was set up primarily to facilitate the creation of a West African Customs Union, offering compensation to those states whose revenues were diminished by progressive reductions in tariff levels. Its other important, but subordinate functions were to guarantee foreign loans intended to finance approved projects within the region and, in some instances, to provide financial resources. What soon became apparent, however, was the fact that, in a Community designed to create new economic opportunities in an otherwise largely underdeveloped and ill-equipped region, the Fund would inevitably assume particular significance, especially to the poorer members.

For those who were so inclined, it was easy to project the agency not as a Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development, but as one for Development, Compensation and Cooperation. Given a sufficiently astute and determined Managing Director, and an incomplete and still largely inchoate Secretariat, the opportunities for making the Fund and its activities the focus of the entire Community were soon evident to all. Worse, the concern of the founding fathers to insulate the Fund and its executive officers from excessive interference, whether from inside or outside the Community, did much to encourage a view of the Fund not as an agency with limited autonomy and broad discretion, but as a totally independent institution functioning only nominally within the wider Community.

These problems, as we shall see, were inherent in the Treaty itself and in the accompanying protocols, signed in November 1976. Together they provided the basis for a continuing and bitter conflict that delayed the development of the Community for almost two years, and even threatened the broad but undefined consensus on which it rested.

In other circumstances, and with other officials, issues that soon arose might have continued to remain dormant, although it is difficult to see how friction could have been avoided indefinitely, even under the most favourable conditions. Coming as the 'crisis' did, at the very outset of the Community's operations, it was fortunately still possible for the Authority and the Council of Ministers to take effective remedial action - while other divisions within the Community were still latent and there was less risk of cumulative tensions triggering an even more serious upheaval. Had the problem arisen at a later stage, when lines of communication were established and an administrative hierarchy was more securely entrenched in both the Secretariat and the Fund, it is difficult to see how the dispute could have been so readily contained.

#### Profiles of ECOWAS Officials

With the unavoidable delays at the end of 1975 and the protracted negotiations during 1976, everyone associated with ECOWAS was anxious for a quick take-off by the new institutions. In this regard there were valuable contributions from all those involved, both states and individuals, but particular mention must be made of the efforts of the Task Force, set up in February 1977 and composed for the most part of officials and experts from Togo and Nigeria, who provided technical assistance to the chief executive officers of ECOWAS until other permanent staff were assigned

and could assume their new duties. It was the Task Force which drew up the necessary documentation and prepared the various organisation charts, along with the job profiles of officials, operating rules, staff regulations and conditions of service within the Community, as well as the financial regulations and administrative procedures that would in future govern the operation of its executive organs, i.e., the secretariat and the Fund, located in Lagos and Lomé.

The Executive Secretary and the Managing Director of the Fund had each experienced some initial difficulty in adjusting to his new role and in coming to terms with a relatively unfamiliar environment. Within three months of taking up their appointments, concern was already being expressed about the performance of the leading ECOWAS officials and there was criticism of some of their first initiatives, notably by the host countries, Nigeria and Togo. Together these two countries had been assigned responsibility for the new institutions during the brief but difficult transitional period. While the officials were understandably anxious to make their mark as quickly as possible and to create favourable conditions for the operation of their institutions, the host country was equally concerned that they should respect the mandate given them under the Treaty and comply with the wishes of those who had so recently created the Community.

The Executive Secretary, Dr. A.Ouattara, proved himself an open, energetic and effective administrator - at least in the view of many observers. Prepared to work, in the transitional phase, within the guidelines provided by the Task Force, he was nevertheless anxious to consolidate his position and to involve other states in the work of the Secretariat at

the earliest opportunity. His critics warned that he was inclined to attempt too much too quickly and with too little preparation. However, it is on record that he soon recognised the over-riding need to organise the work of the Secretariat and other institutions on a sound and efficient basis, before proceeding to the more rewarding but long-term task of furthering the development of the region as a whole.

His initial problem arose when on finding the Secretariat unable to function effectively in the initial months and its operations crippled by a temporary lack of funds, Dr. Ouattara solicited and immediately obtained financial assistance from his country of origin, the Ivory Coast, until such time as the host government, Nigeria, would authorise payment of the full amount required from its own resources for the work of the Community Secretariat. In my view the Executive Secretary was fully justified in acting as he did, given the unfortunate delay on the part of the Nigerian authorities in meeting their commitments. At the same time it was in the interests of all that the host government should first be able to assure itself that strict financial control and discipline was being exercised within the Secretariat and that funds, when disbursed, would be used for the purpose for which they were provided.

Nigeria, as the host country responsible for ensuring the smooth and successful running of the Secretariat advised Dr. Ouattara to return the temporary loan to the Ivory Coast, and immediately released the full amount required for the operations of the Secretariat - until such time as the contributions from member states became available. With this issue satisfactorily resolved, the Executive Secretary was able, without further ado, to re-direct

his attention and his energies to the organisation of the Secretariat. The fact that he was reputed to enjoy the confidence of the President of the Ivory Coast was no great handicap in an organisation that depended to such an extent on continuing good relations between French and English-speaking countries and, in particular, on the rapprochement, after 1970, between Nigeria and the Ivory Coast.

Himself bi-lingual, Dr. Ouattara was concerned to utilise existing sub-regional bodies and organisations, wherever possible, to achieve the objectives of the new regional Community - reflecting a view that was widespread among the Francophone leaders and was also shared by such Anglophone leaders as Presidents Tolbert and Siaka Stevens, involved as they were in the Mano River Union. While the ECOWAS concept was a great and pioneering one, Dr. Ouattara was ready to point out that "they were not starting from scratch. They would use the services of existing organisations of all kinds, rather than try to build up a huge separate bureaucracy to tackle all the tasks before them." The Executive Secretary was simply expounding the provisions of the ECOWAS Treaty when he commented, further, that "all such bodies have our blessing". He was prepared, too, to "sub-contract" ECOWAS work to other organisations already in the field and having compatible or parallel goals - including the entire gamut of United Nations agencies. 3/

Dr. Ouattara seems quickly to have earned the approval of his Nigerian hosts by repudiating any idea that Nigeria could - or had any wish to - dominate ECOWAS.

Obviously Nigeria provides the chairman if we meet in Lagos. But our Ministerial and Heads of State meetings will rotate among members according to alphabetical order. And although Nigeria is obviously the biggest contributor, according to our formula there is no 'weighting'. She has only the same representation as any other country at our meetings. 4/

His approach was pragmatic while his requests for assistance were by no means regarded as excessive. "There is so much for us to do. But we do not have to invent the bicycle. That was done long ago and our job is to use the machine." He accepted the Treaty as providing the "guidelines" for ECOWAS and maintained that "within this he can fit all that ECOWAS might try to do."

In the case of the Fund and its Managing Director, Dr. Romeo Horton, the problems were more serious and much less easily resolved since, as we have pointed out, there was some ambiguity in the provisions of the Treaty and the Protocols regarding the precise relationship between the Fund and the Secretariat. The issue was, however, compounded by the contrasting personalities heading the two agencies.

Dr. Horton has been described as "aggressive, but gracious in his manners, gregarious but correct in his human relations" and one who "mixed a disarming informality with firmness." A pan-Africanist, devoted like his first political leader, President Tubman, to the creation of a free trade area in the West African region, he had a long experience in African banking and had been among those who helped promote the African Development Bank in 1964. "Known for his great diplomatic and negotiating skills", and as

leader of Tubman's "special diplomatic task force", Dr.Horton quickly became "a well known figure in many African capitals and to many African Heads of State in the '60s", assisting Tubman in his efforts to bring together the Casablanca and Monrovia groupings in order to facilitate the creation of the OAU in 1963. <sup>5/</sup>

Nor only was Dr.Horton apparently well connected in government as well as business circles in Liberia, and a close associate of Presidents Tubman and Tolbert, but he was clearly also an experienced political operator - but one evidently more at home in Liberian and American-style politics, and less familiar with the West European patterns of government and administration prevalent in other West African countries. A gifted "survivor" and "a man of great debating skills", he was apparently able to utilise his many and existing talents to strengthen his position as Managing Director of the ECOWAS Fund but seems to have been somewhat less successful in adapting his free-wheeling style to meet the political and administrative requirements of a complex, multinational economic community.

With an entrepreneurial rather than a bureaucratic approach, Dr.Horton may well have preferred to set his own goals, take his own decisions, create his own support base, and make separate international arrangements for the funding of his projects. According to a West Africa correspondent : "For him nothing is impossible". Again, "he has no patience with theories, arguing that all known empires or great institutions were built by men of action capable of making great decisions." Set in his ways, he was characterised by a "strong will", and "tough and dogged character" and

a "fierce nationalism". <sup>6/</sup> Discounting possible bias and even some exaggeration in this journalistic portrait, it is nevertheless easy to see why the Managing Director of the Fund might be reluctant to assume a subordinate position in the administrative hierarchy of ECOWAS, convinced as he was of the constitutional merits of his case.

### Origins of the Dispute

Problems began shortly after Dr. Horton arrived in Lomé to start work, with an initial staff of three officials from Liberia. It was reported that one of them was later dispatched to Lagos to act as liaison officer between the Fund and the Secretariat. Dr. Ouattara's reaction was naturally unfavourable:

It is alleged that this officer was not well received as Dr. Ouattara felt that Dr. Horton should have been in Lagos personally at least in the initial stages to work directly with the Executive Secretary. The officer was subsequently called to Lomé. Thus the first seed of discontent was laid between the two men.

7/

Whatever the trust of this, there is no doubt that effective liaison between the Secretariat and the Fund was, from the outset, "virtually nil".

Following on this incident a further "difference" seems to have arisen between the two Community officials over the related question of who was to have responsibility for the administration of the Community as a whole. Dr. Horton felt, perhaps with some justification, that if the Treaty was



interpreted literally then the Fund was in fact independent of the Secretariat and a separate and completely distinct legal entity for which he alone was responsible to the Authority and, in some matters, to the Council of Ministers. That then became the dominant issue and would defy all subsequent attempts at mediation and conciliation until Dr.Horton's withdrawal and replacement in 1979, at the prompting of the Authority itself.

Dr.Horton's early difficulties were not confined, however, to his relations with the Executive Secretary, crucial though these were to the well-being of the Community. There were also problems between the Managing Director and the authorities in Lomé, concerning a number of Dr.Horton's early initiatives, including his policy on the staffing of the Fund which, it was claimed was, unrepresentative of the Community as a whole. There were allegations, moreover, that the Managing Director would take advice from no quarter and would not be held accountable even to his own Board of Directors, whose Chairman was the Togolese Minister, Mr.Yao Grunitzky. Yet another source of complaints was Dr.Horton's choice of technical advisers from outside West Africa, mainly from the United States and Britain, without having first, it was said, exhausted the talent available within the region.

The issue of the Fund and its Managing Director quickly became a *cause célèbre*, and the major obstacle to the continuing and harmonious development of the Community. Various steps would be taken at different times, by people within different institutions, before the matter was finally settled some two years later, in May 1979, at a Summit meeting in Dakar.

First Intervention by the Council of Ministers : July 1977

As the dispute involved a conflict about the interpretation of the Treaty and the relevant protocol, it appeared, from an early stage, that some authoritative intervention was urgently required before the activities of one or other, or both of the Community's principal officials prompted a damaging crisis within the organisation. Moreover, in such a delicate constitutional matter, it was likely that the Authority would itself have, at some time, to issue a directive pronouncing once and for all on the points at issue. Until then the Nigerian government was understandably reluctant to allow itself to be embroiled in a dispute that did not yet concern it directly and which might well sour its previous good relations with the Liberian government, which had nominated Dr. Horton to his present post. Liberia, even if willing, would be hard pressed to replace Dr. Horton at short notice, and, in any case, the Managing Director had as yet done nothing that he could not defend on the basis of the legal instrument establishing ECOWAS.

Alive to its special responsibilities, however, the Nigerian Government sought by other means to persuade Dr. Horton to cooperate both with the Secretariat in Lagos and with the host government in Lomé, while General Obasanjo recognised the urgent need to remove the underlying cause of the friction which was the ambiguity concerning the constitutional position of the Fund in relation to the Secretariat. However, this could only be done by the Heads of State, themselves, acting perhaps on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers. Any other independent initiative

by Nigeria and Togo would only serve to antagonise the other states while giving the misleading impression that Nigeria and Togo had some kind of monopoly of Community wisdom.

Early in July 1977 the Nigerian Government, after joint consultation with Togo, wrote to all Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS apprising them of the progress so far in setting up the various institutions of the Community and of the proposed programme of action to speed up realisation of the ECOWAS objectives. <sup>8/</sup> It was encouraging to see that the Secretariat had, by then, successfully organised a meeting of two of the four Technical and Specialised Commissions - the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission, and the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Commission. The outcome of their deliberations would form the basis of their programme of action to deal with the Community's problems in these areas. It was a good and positive beginning.

Regarding the Fund, General Obasanjo was able to report that the headquarters were now also satisfactorily established in Lomé and that the first meeting of the Board of Directors was scheduled to take place later that month - and did in fact begin on July 25. But the purpose of the letter was to obtain the assent of the member states for the convening of the first meeting of the Council of Ministers since the signing of the protocols at the end of the previous year. It was proposed that the Council should meet in Lagos, from July 18-22, to consider a range of issues relating to the effective functioning of the Community, such as the staffing of the Secretariat, the headquarters agreement, the budget for 1977-78, the initial capitalisation of the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development, and the contributions of member states to both the budget and the Community Fund.

The response to the letter was positive and the meeting was duly held in Lagos during that month. On the relations between the Secretariat and the Fund, the Council of Ministers noted a number of ambiguities in the Treaty and protocols establishing ECOWAS, especially in respect of the powers of the Executive Secretary and the role of the Managing Director of the Fund. As a result of these ambiguities the two chief executives had thus far viewed their roles and functions very differently - a state of affairs that could, if unchecked, prove fatal to the Community.

It was Articles 8 (9) of the Treaty and Articles 28 (7) and (8) of the protocols that had given rise to the confusion and the subsequent controversy. While Article 8 (9) of the Treaty says that the Executive Secretary "shall be responsible for the day to day administration of the Community and all its institutions", it does not specifically mention the Fund as one such institution over which the Executive Secretary can exercise supervisory jurisdiction. As if to reinforce the ambiguity, Articles 28 (7) and (8) of the protocols made the Managing Director of the Fund its "Legal Representative", and its "Chief Executive", empowered him to "conduct the current business of the Fund under the direction of the Board of Directors", and held him "responsible for the organisation, appointment and dismissal of the officers and staff in accordance with regulations made by the Board of Directors".

Certainly it had not been the intention of the founding fathers to create two separate and autonomous institutions within the framework of ECOWAS. My recollection is that we saw the Executive Secretary at the apex of the administrative hierarchy. With the exception of the Authority,

the Council of Ministers and the Tribunal of the Community, we saw all other bodies and institutions as subordinate to the Executive Secretary, who was himself appointed by the Authority and was entrusted with the smooth running of all parts of the Community. The Fund was definitely designed as an agency which, because of the specialised nature of its work and the expertise required, enjoyed considerable discretion in its technical operations, but which had at the same time to respect the position of the Executive Secretary as the essential link between all the administrative echelons of the Community, on the one hand, and the Council of Ministers and the Authority on the other.

We could not have envisaged and would never have permitted a situation in which the Fund and its officers were allowed to pursue objectives that were not identical with those of the Community as a whole, or were in a position to authorise undertakings that had not first been referred by the Secretariat to representatives of member states for their collective consideration and approval. It was our view that Community appointees must act together in a spirit of mutual understanding, good will and cooperation, particularly at the higher levels where the executives would have to draw up a well coordinated programme of work for the Community as a whole, with the approval of the Council and the Authority. The fact that membership of the Board of Directors of the Fund was almost identical with that of the Council of Ministers should have been sufficient guarantee of consistency of policy between the two bodies, and should have ensured continuing adherence by all concerned to the objectives set by the Authority.

In preparation for the meeting of the Council of Ministers there was doubtless much discussion among ministers and their leaders in an attempt to prepare a set of recommendations that would help resolve the dispute. Considering Dr.Horton's general attitude so far, some countries, including Togo, had initially wanted his recall and replacement by someone more sympathetic to the conceptions that had inspired the Community. Nigeria had counselled patience, hoping by less formal and drastic means to prevail on the Managing Director to accept the need for frequent consultation with the Executive Secretary and to adopt administrative procedures more consonant with modern international practice.

It is probable, too, that the issue was the subject of talks at the OAU Summit in Libreville, in 1977, particularly among the West African countries directly concerned. Indeed, relations between the Togolese authorities and the Managing Director of the Fund did show a marked improvement after Libreville. Meanwhile, by a combination of persuasion and diplomacy the Nigerian Government evidently hoped to achieve a better working relationship between Fund and Secretariat. It recognised, at the same time, that a long term solution would involve action by the Council and the Authority to remove the anomalies in the Treaty and protocols, without which the dispute could not have assumed its present importance.

The intention clearly was to try and keep Dr.Horton and Dr.Ouattara at their respective posts, while promoting improved relations between them and working towards a mutually acceptable solution that would nevertheless confirm the responsibility of the Executive Secretary for all aspects of

administration within ECOWAS. Various expedients were therefore considered, whereby a lasting improvement might be achieved. One possibility was that Nigeria might nominate the Deputy Managing Director of the Fund, in that way acquiring some say in its operations. However, apart from possible objections by other interested countries, perhaps anxious for a wider distribution of posts, it was almost certain that the Francophone states would contest a decision to entrust the activities of the Fund to two English-speaking officials. In any case, it was for the Managing Director, himself, to define the responsibilities of his Deputy after his appointment. There was no guarantee, therefore, that he would be able to influence the Fund's operations to an appreciable extent.

The Office of Financial Controller, whose powers were nowhere clearly defined, either in the Treaty or the protocols, seemed to offer better prospects of a satisfactory solution. By inviting the Council of Ministers to invest him with real powers of control and by locating him, not in the Fund headquarters in Lomé, but with the Secretariat at Lagos, it was hoped that a more effective and continuing liaison might yet be established between the two. It was for the Council then to consider and perhaps recommend the definition of a clear chain of command, establishing once and for all the responsibility of the Executive Secretary for administration throughout the Community, and at the same time to invite the Authority to invest the new Financial Controller, yet to be appointed, with powers of audit extending to both the Secretariat and the Fund.

The Council of Ministers, meeting in Lagos in July 1977, whose chairman was the Nigerian Commissioner for Economic Development, Professor O.Adewoye, was anxious to lay down clear lines of operation for the main executive institutions of the Community. To that end the Council made the following recommendations to the Authority:

- (i) ECOWAS is one corporate body subsuming all its institutions, including the Fund;
- (ii) Administratively, ECOWAS has a hierarchical organisation with the Executive Secretary at its head;
- (iii) The Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development is a financial institution only in the context of the objectives set for ECOWAS, the financial operational instrument for translating into reality the aims and objectives set out in Article 2 of the Treaty;
- (iv) While the Managing Director enjoys considerable autonomy in the day to day administration of the Fund in accordance with Articles 28 (8) of the Protocols to the Treaty, the Executive Secretary has a coordinating role to play in relation to the Fund and the Community as a whole;
- (v) It follows from (ii), (iii), (iv) above that there should be constant consultations between the Managing Director of the Fund and the Executive Secretary in matters of policy. In a spirit of mutual respect it is expected that the Executive Secretary and the Managing Director of the Fund would discuss with each other major issues affecting the Fund and ECOWAS as a whole.

9/

Having tried to establish that principle, the Council proceeded to recommend interim measures to try to ensure closer liaison between the two. Henceforth, it proposed:

- (vi) The meetings of the Board of Directors of the Fund should always precede those of the Council of Ministers, since the latter, judging from a general reading of the Treaty and its Protocols is the greater authority of the two;



These arrangements will ensure good working relations not only between the Board of Directors and the Council but also between the Executive Secretary and the Managing Director of the Fund. No meeting of the Board of Directors should be held without consultation with the Executive Secretary regarding the agenda and the time for the meeting;

(vii) To ensure effective liaison between the Executive Secretary and the Managing Director of the Fund, the Financial Controller at the Secretariat should serve as an internal auditor not only for the Secretariat but also for the Fund. While the internal auditing unit at the Fund Headquarters is administratively under the control of the Managing Director, it is operationally responsible to the Financial Controller at the Secretariat;

(viii) There should be regular meetings, say, once every two months, or quarterly, alternating between Lagos and Lome, to review activities both at the Secretariat and at the Fund Headquarters and to formulate working policies. Each review meeting should comprise:

The Executive Secretary	- Chairman
The Managing Director of the Fund	- Vice-Chairman
The Deputy Director of the Fund	- Member
The Financial Controller	- Member
The Two Deputy Executive Secretaries	- Members

Despite these eminently sensible and practical suggestions, the Council of Ministers was nevertheless well aware that:

(ix) Proper relations between the two officers cannot be maintained solely by rules and regulations. There is always room for mutual respect, mutual confidence and those simple norms of good human relations which cannot really be codified.

10/

These recommendations were later tabled before the meeting of the Authority, in Lagos, in April 1978, when they were approved and subsequently implemented. Meanwhile, on the subject of the appointment and functions of ECOWAS officials, which was a matter for the Council, itself,

there was an attempt to broaden the basis of representation in the Community institutions and to ensure the appointment to the new posts of suitably qualified candidates. The role and functions of the Financial Controller were set out in detail while the chief executives were enjoined to involve their deputies fully in the formulation of policy. The decisions were important for the future development of the Community and also had a direct bearing on the dispute between the Secretariat and the Fund. They were that:

- (i) The post of the two Deputy Executive Secretaries of ECOWAS, the Deputy Director of the Fund and the Financial Controller of the Community be filled in terms of Member States designated by the Ministerial Council;
- (ii) Such designated Member States should supply to the Ministerial Council the Curriculum Vitae of their most highly qualified and experienced nationals for such posts.
- (iii) Where a designated Member State is unable to comply with the requirements of any such posts, that Member State should forthwith indicate the fact to the Chairman of the Ministerial Council;
- (iv) The two Deputy Executive Secretaries of ECOWAS should function as the chief advisers of the Executive Secretary and should be totally involved together with him in the formulation of all policy matters affecting the Community. In addition, they may be specifically assigned to such other duties as the Executive Secretary may determine.
- (v) The Deputy Director of the Fund should likewise function as the chief adviser of the Managing Director in the formulation of all policy matters affecting the Fund. In addition he may be specifically assigned such other duties as the Managing Director may determine;

- (v) The Deputy Director of the Fund should likewise function as the chief adviser of the Managing Director in the formulation of all policy matters affecting the Fund. In addition he may be specifically assigned such other duties as the Managing Director may determine;
- (vi) The Financial Controller shall be responsible to effect all financial and budgetary control over the Secretariat, the Fund and all other subordinate institutions of the Community;
- (vii) The Financial Controller is empowered to prescribe all necessary rules and regulations to facilitate the efficient discharge of his duties, such rules and regulations to be previously approved by the Ministerial Council;
- (viii) The Financial Controller shall regularly submit reports of his work direct to the Chairman of the Ministerial Council, copy the Executive Secretary, the Managing Director of the Fund and the head of any subordinate institutions that may be affected thereby. He shall be in attendance at meetings of the Council of Ministers and the Board of Directors of the Fund.
- (ix) To ensure effective liaison between the Executive Secretary and the Managing Director of the Fund, the Financial Controller at the Secretariat should serve as an internal auditor not only for the Secretariat but also for the Fund. While the internal auditing unit at the Fund Headquarters is administratively under the control of the Managing Director, it is operationally responsible to the Financial Controller at the Secretariat;
- (x) The Council of Ministers at its second sessions decided that the above posts be filled in the first instance by nationals of the following Member States:

Posts

Deputy Executive Secretary I	- Republic of Guinea
Deputy Executive Secretary II	- Ghana
Deputy Director of the Fund	- Benin
Financial Controller	- Nigeria

- (xi) The Council of Ministers further considers that it is desirable that the posts of Directors or other heads of divisions of the Secretariat, the Fund or other subordinate institutions of the Community should be filled as the case may be by the Executive Secretary, the Managing Director of the Fund or the head of the relevant subordinate institution, bearing in mind equitable geographical distribution of such posts and also bearing in mind the professional, academic and administrative competence and experience.

These decisions did not require the approval of the Authority and could therefore be implemented at once in accordance with Article 6 (2) and (3) of the Treaty. In the light of earlier experience and problems, they were designed to ensure that the administrative personnel of the Community were recruited in such a way as to make the institutions representative of the Community as a whole, and at the same time to guarantee a level of competence compatible with a reasonable degree of administrative efficiency.

The same meeting of the Council approved an interim budget for the operations of the Community (July-December 1977), agreed on the capitalisation of the Fund for its first year, approved the manpower requirements for the Community and the conditions of service and superannuation of its employees, and invited the Executive Secretary to make recommendations to its next meeting, later in the year, concerning the establishment of a Data Bank and a Bilingual School of Management and Public Administration. It also called on the Executive Secretary to produce and submit in November draft proposals for a non-aggression pact, and for a protocol facilitating the free movement of persons within the Community. And the following were designated priority areas for immediate study with a view to future action:

- (i) A study in the structure of Customs Tariffs and Trade Flows with a view to implementing the Customs Union, developing trade and assessing revenue implications of tariffs reduction;
- (ii) A study into the problems of Transport and Telecommunications particularly the Panaftel programme as it affects the area of the Community, the aim being the establishment of efficient transport and telecommunications networks in ECOWAS;
- (iii) A General Economic Survey of Member States of the Community to assess current economic condition of the sub-region as an entity, and provide a sound information base on which to build the Community's perspective plan.

Second Intervention by the Council of Ministers : November 1977

Shortly after the Council of Ministers in Lagos, much the same personnel attended the first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fund in Lomé, from 25-27 July 1977. It was at this meeting that the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development became operational. After reminding those present of the purpose of the Community, General Eyadema emphasised the theme of *development* and the central role that the Community and, within the Community, the Fund could play in promoting that development. ECOWAS "must be a real zone of development within which the development of each of our states can take place." <sup>13/</sup> That was the main task confronting the Fund.

If the Community we have set up is not to mean for some states a loss of income so that there is a need to ensure for each fair compensation, we must also pay heed to the statement made by one of our colleagues that, to achieve true integration of our development, we must transcend the notions of compensation for loss of revenue. <sup>14/</sup>

*Compensation* then was to be subordinate to the over-riding imperative of development, while the ECOWAS institutions and particularly the Fund "constitute the ideal framework for a harmonious development provided that they are not deflected from their objective." But *cooperation* was essential to the achievement of that goal. "Let us remain strong and united, for it is only in this way that Africa will overcome." <sup>15/</sup>

The mood of euphoria accompanying the launching of the Fund continued as Togo's Minister of Finance, Mr. Yao Grunitzky, maintained that the Fund

Is an instrument for cooperation and compensation and will be the driving force in the development of the community. At a time when the world economic order is crumbling and the ways and means employed to seek solutions are making no headway - for example, the North-South Dialogue has not justified the hopes placed in it - a community like ours should be able to make its weight felt on the world economic order. 16/

But it was the Managing Director of the Fund, Dr.A.Romeo Horton, who delivered one of the most stirring and best received speeches.

I come before you at this moment, filled with a sense of history as together we stand at the threshold of launching what is today, despite the attendant problems, the largest and most viable economic unit in West Africa. 17/

Recalling his long-standing commitment to West African economic union, Dr.Horton emphasised the economic potential of the region and, by implication, the exalted role of the Fund within the Community. "We must replace poverty with prosperity, and under-development with technological and social advancement." 18/

It was this speech that the Nigerian Commissioner for Economic Development and Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Professor O.Adeboye, alluded to when he described Dr.Horton as "the ECOWAS missionary", a remark made in good faith but which he may later have had some cause to regret. Shortly after the completion of proceedings in Lomé, Dr.Horton took the initiative in disclosing a number of possible enterprises in which the Fund might soon be interested, ranging from the coordination of airline services within the region, to the setting up of an ECOWAS iron and steel industry - a project

with which Liberia had long been associated - and, finally, an "integrated fishing industry", with its own processing plants in member states. <sup>19/</sup>  
 This last proposal was likely to prove attractive to the many coastal states of the region. But, however, commendable these projects, they seem to have had but little bearing on the priority areas designated by the earlier Council of Ministers.

The Board of Directors was able, nevertheless, to agree on July 25, 1977, as the date on which the Fund would commence operations, with its Capital fixed at 500,000,000 SDR (Special Drawing Rights), of which 100,000,000 SDR must come from the contributions of member states - and with the understanding that 50,000,000 SDR must be deposited in the course of the first year. <sup>20/</sup>  
 At the conclusion of the meeting the Togolese Government was in a position to submit an encouraging report on the progress made in Lomé. And considering that Togo had expressed some reservations about the performance of the Managing Director, it was gratifying to be able to note in that report that "a marked improvement has been recorded at the level of the Managing Director of the Fund". As "co-sponsors", it is "our duty to ensure the introduction and consolidation of good relations of collaboration and cooperation between the officials and the organs of the ECOWAS" - the decisions of the recent Board of Directors and the conclusions of the previous Council of Ministers "enables me to look at the future of these institutions of our Community with confidence." <sup>21/</sup>

Optimistic though this report was, there was still no visible or appreciable improvement in the mutual cooperation between the Executive

Secretary and the Managing Director of the Fund. From all accounts the blame must rest squarely with the Managing Director, who did not conceal his opposition to the idea that the role of the Fund should be subordinate to that of the Secretariat. Prior to the Council of Ministers meeting in November, growing concern was expressed within the Community, by Nigeria and others, about the recruitment and staffing policies of the Fund and, more important, the continued refusal of the Managing Director to accept instructions from any source within the Community other than his Board of Directors.

The Chairman of the Council of Ministers envisaged the creation of a single appointments and promotions board responsible for vetting applicants for posts in the Fund as well as the Secretariat and, pending consideration of this matter at the forthcoming Council of Ministers, had suggested that both bodies should stay action on existing applications until a decision was taken. <sup>22/</sup> This was acceptable to the Executive Secretary, who disclosed that apart from members inherited from the special Task Force, and the officials appointed by the last Council of Ministers, "as far as I am concerned, no permanent appointment has yet been made at the Secretariat." <sup>23/</sup> Dr. Horton, on the other hand, indicated that he was "left no choice but to continue to manage the affairs of the Fund in keeping with the Treaty and Protocols and in strict compliance with directives of the Board." Which, "of course, includes appointment of personnel and collection of contributions from Member States to the ordinary Capital of the Fund." <sup>24/</sup>

The Chairman of the Council of Ministers was concerned, that "the Fund is still being regarded, not as structurally a part of



ECOWAS, but as an autonomous institution with its own hierarchy of authorities separate and apart from that of the Council of Ministers." He further observed "gradually, but surely, I can see the Board of Directors for the Fund being regarded as the co-equal of the Council of Ministers, which is supposed to be the highest policy-making organ of ECOWAS below the Authority."<sup>25/</sup> This view seemed to be substantiated in view of the fact that despite their almost identical membership, some of the Ministers serving on the Board of Directors were inclined to take a more relaxed and tolerant attitude to practices that they had already condemned as members of the Council of Ministers. While trying to secure the administrative authority of the Executive Secretary over the Managing Director, the chairman saw the need for some clarification of the relationship between the Council and the Board, differentiating more clearly between the specialist functions of the latter and the broad political responsibility of the former.

The Nigerian Head of State seemed ready to support the idea of a Joint Appointments and Promotions Board, but rightly warned about the problems of securing uniformity of standards across so many countries with such varied administrative grades and procedures and systems of education. In some cases, experience and integrity might well count for more than formal educational attainment.<sup>26/</sup> As for the question of further reforms, in an international organisation such as ECOWAS, more might be achieved by assuming a 'low profile' and pursuing patient diplomacy than by mounting a major offensive across a wide political front. As a correspondent in West Africa pointed out : "This is not an organisation in which anything can be hurried."<sup>27/</sup>

This was the strategy followed by Professor Adewoye at the two-day Council of Ministers in Lagos in November 1977. The Council followed a four-day meeting of experts, largely concerned, like the Council, with organisational matters, "of which the major one, no doubt, is the relationship of the ECOWAS Fund ... with its headquarters in Lomé, and the Secretariat, with its headquarters in Lagos." <sup>28/</sup> This preoccupation with internal matters and the fact that this was the second Council meeting in Lagos within six months may account for the presence of a number of relatively junior ministers, while Guinea Bissau, for whom international representation is always a problem, was not represented at all.

In his opening speech Dr. Adewoye made little reference to the internal problems of the organisation directing the attention of his audience rather to the heritage of colonialism and the risks of neo-colonialism. The only sure way of "breaking the shackles of poverty and neo-colonialism" was to foster industrialisation on a regional basis.

If ECOWAS is so crucial to our development, what are our duties as Ministers in terms of nurturing the organisation? The first is to let us continue employing our statesmanlike approach to all matters relating to it. Whatever are the issues being discussed, whether they concern administration or policy, please let us always remember that it is the interest of our Community that should predominate. The interest of ECOWAS should transcend partisan or personal considerations. This is the time to lay a solid foundation for the Community : tomorrow may be too late.

Because of the difficulties experienced in appointments and in other matters, the Council subsequently agreed, after long discussion, to set up an Investigation Committee, under the Gambian Minister Alhaji M.C.Cham, with representatives of Mali, Benin (Dahomey) and Sierra Leone, and their technical advisers. The Committee was instructed to look into and report on all relevant matters affecting the relationship between the Fund and the ECOWAS Secretariat. The report of that committee would be presented to the Council of Ministers, meeting in Lagos, in April 1978, prior to the next ECOWAS Summit. <sup>30/</sup>

#### Third Ministerial Intervention and Summit : April 1978

At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fund, in January 1978, Dr. Horton, who had been commended at the inaugural meeting in July, was now sharply criticised by Directors for presenting a report that seems to have fallen short of their expectations. They complained that the underlying tone of the report gave the impression that there were two organisations, not one in the Community, the Secretariat *and* the Fund, and this despite their earlier admonition - and that of the Council of Ministers - regarding the need for mutual respect and cooperation between the two institutions. <sup>31/</sup>

This was also criticism of the unorthodox procedures adopted for appointment to and promotion within the Fund and the Director's very personal style of management. It was argued, too, that he had presented an unrealistic development programme, which was not coordinated or harmonised with that of the Secretariat, while the Directors also had reason to question the criteria for including such apparently diverse

projects as fisheries, cement industries, phosphate mining and processing.

Furthermore, at a time when the operations of the Fund were just commencing and when only three of the sixteen member states had paid any part of their contribution to the Fund, the Managing Director was proposing a budget substantially larger than the previous one - an increase of over three hundred per cent. - and involving a considerable expansion in staff numbers. Again, there was a need to separate capital and recurrent expenditure and to diversify the pattern of the Fund's investments.

A resolution was adopted calling the attention of the Managing Director to these criticisms and to the Board's instructions thereon. He was also required to refrain from making permanent, non-statutory senior appointments to the Board until the candidates could be screened by the proposed Board of Appointments and Promotions. Such senior appointments as had been made should be deemed temporary.

The Managing Director was not, however, without some support on the Board at this stage as can be seen from the published resolution, at the end of the Board's proceedings, where the report of the chief executive was said to have been noted "with satisfaction", while the Board had also expressed "its appreciation for the high qualities of the said report." <sup>32/</sup> Which would also explain why, rather than take further action itself, the Board preferred to await the result of the Cham Committee of Investigation, set up at the last meeting of the Council of Ministers.

There was no question of Dr. Horton's persuasive talents, sharp political instincts or his capacity for survival. It was the case, however, that ECOWAS, like any large, multinational community, contained an assortment of views and priorities and was therefore vulnerable to any activity that might favour one or other section of the Community. Success required the full cooperation of all concerned in achieving our goal, which was the development of the region and, eventually, of the Continent as a whole. The Community could not afford the luxury of bureaucratic rivalries, still less the prospect that any one agency, e.g., the Fund, might try to usurp the future of the organisation as a whole.

In such a community there is always the fear that any official, with responsibility for funds, appointments and in some cases projects, may deploy them to secure his base or to enlarge his prospective audience - playing on the need of most states for additional investment to create both wealth and employment. The poorest states, in particular, will inevitably be attracted towards those institutions and agencies, and those personalities, that promise early and effective remedial action to help overcome their many, otherwise intractable problems. Which is why it took no small courage on the part of the relevant Nigerian officials to defend our original conception of the Community against those who might seek to distort it to serve their own immediate ends.

As the largest single contributor to the Community budget and to the Fund, Nigeria enjoyed a considerable influence, although voting within the Fund and on its governing Board was in no way weighted to reflect the size of members' contributions. But Nigeria's position was also a delicate one,

as her leaders would not wish to invite the criticism that they were using financial muscle to impose their views and policies on the Community as a whole - and especially to the detriment of the smaller, poorer and, for the most part, Francophone states. Individuals, however, could not be prevented from voicing their dissatisfaction with certain aspects of Community policy or administration.

Thus the first published criticism of the activities of the Managing Director of the Fund had already appeared in an article, in September 1977, in the Nigerian Herald, which was a newspaper quite independent of the central government and circulating in Kwara State. <sup>33/</sup> Shortly after the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fund, in January 1978, there appeared a strident defence of Dr.Horton, in the Liberian Age, which was known to be close to the ruling party in Monrovia. A feature article alleged that Nigeria had been responsible for most of the criticism directed at Dr.Horton during the recent meeting of the Board, and implying that Nigeria was exercising undue influence in the affairs of the Fund. <sup>34/</sup> This was almost certainly not the case, but the issue was a sensitive one, calling for the exercise of diplomatic skills and a watchful eye on the part of the West African leaders - if retaliation and mutual recrimination were not to become the order of the day throughout the region.

It would already have been clear to the governments involved that, whereas the functions of the Community were mainly economic, a degree of political cooperation was at all times indispensable to its smooth and

successful operation. Indeed, the political dimensions of the dispute - increasingly in evidence throughout 1978 - illustrated yet again the need for the closest cooperation within as well as between governments. Particularly in Nigeria, where the administrative machinery was so large and complex, there was the ever-present need to coordinate the activities of the Ministry of Economic Development, which had primary responsibility for ECOWAS, with those of the Ministry of External Affairs, responsible for the country's relations with all West African states and with the rest of the world.

And as the controversy continued within ECOWAS, there does seem to have been a move by foreign ministries in several other West African countries, to become more directly involved in ECOWAS affairs - on the grounds that the Community, at least in its formative phase, would inevitably be concerned rather more with politics and diplomacy than with economics. Fortunately, such incursions, where they threatened previous arrangements, were firmly resisted, although the need for improved communication, between governments *and* between ministries, was widely recognised, as, of course, was the political nature of the commitment to ECOWAS, depending as the organisation did, on the continuing good will of all sixteen member states.

Conscious of its duties and responsibilities towards ECOWAS, Nigeria therefore assumed the leadership of those who wanted to ensure respect for the spirit as well as the letter of the Treaty and Protocols, and of the Community who approved the decisions of the previous Council of Ministers as they concerned the administration. The Council, which met again in Lagos from April 10-18, 1978, to make recommendations to the Third Summit

of Heads of State and Government, was primarily concerned with trade liberalisation measures, the accompanying proposal to secure freedom of movement and residence within the Community, and a draft protocol containing provisions for a non-aggression pact.

The Ministers did, however, also consider the Report of the four-nation Investigation Committee appointed to look into the administrative and structural problems of the Secretariat and the Fund - the Cham Report. Their findings of that Committee were then accepted by the Council. The report indicated, among other things that:

The qualification and experience of the majority of the staff at the Fund leaves much to be desired, and the gaps between qualifications, experience and placement at the Fund is too glaring to warrant further comment.

35/

It recommended immediate steps to stop all further recruitment to the Fund, while the existing professional staff should be given the requisite notice so that new appointments could be made through independent channels. The chief executives of the Fund and the Secretariat would lose their right to hire and fire which would become the responsibility of a separate Appointments and Promotions Board.

As for the operations of the Fund, the Cham Committee confirmed that "the existing situation is unsatisfactory" and recommended that the accounts of the Fund be audited by an independent source, since the accounting



system was held to be deficient in many respects and travelling expenses were thought to be high. <sup>36/</sup> The Committee was thus strongly critical, both of Dr.Horton's recruitment policies and of the absence of orderly financial records of the Fund's activities. Dr.Horton later contended, by way of reply, that the Cham Committee had not fully appreciated the difficulties confronting the Fund in the early days of its operations, while he insisted that there had also been a minority report, with an altogether different viewpoint. <sup>37/</sup>

The eleven point recommendations of the Council, as later amended, were accepted by the Authority at the ensuing Summit meeting in Lagos, on April 21-22. Most notably, the Authority recognised ECOWAS as "a single and indivisible entity with some measure of autonomy to the Fund as a constituent institution of the Community, particularly in banking and financial matters." <sup>38/</sup> As if to underline the primacy of the Secretariat, the Authority proceeded to ratify the appointment of Dr. Abubakar Diaby Ouattara as Executive Secretary. Dr. Horton's appointment was never ratified, either by the Council or by the Authority. At the same time the Authority accepted the need for an External Auditor to complement the activities of the Financial Controller and Sierra Leone were invited to nominate a competent firm for that purpose.

The fact that the Summit was attended by some twelve Heads of State as well as by four senior cabinet ministers - representing Niger, Mali, Ghana and Guinea - was evidence that the administrative problems of the Community had not so far affected the resolve of the member states to make

the grouping a success. <sup>39/</sup> The new Chairman of the Authority, General Obasanjo, made no attempt to minimise the difficulties ECOWAS must face in the future in realising its objectives, but insisted none the less that members should not allow themselves to be discouraged. The difficulties must be overcome.

I can see a great future for a well developed ECOWAS which should be in a position to contribute its quota in the international efforts aimed at the re-ordering of the international economic system. As the future augurs well for our community we should start early to coordinate efforts in order to pave the way for ECOWAS to take its proper place in the international economic community.

<sup>40/</sup>

General Eyadema, in his valedictory address, as the retiring Chairman, spoke in much the same vein, expressing the view that, "as one of the founding fathers of ECOWAS I am happy that the Community, like a new baby born yesterday, can now walk." <sup>41/</sup>

In addition to its recommendations to the Authority, the Council of Ministers had also agreed that, because of the difficulties experienced, current staff employed by the Community should be laid off, pending the appointment of a permanent staff recruited by uniform and approved method. This was within the competence of the Council and meant that, after the statutory period for notice of termination of employment;

ECOWAS ceased functioning as an effective entity. The only people left on permanent employment were Dr. Ouattara, Dr. Horton, their deputies and the minor secretariat staff. All professional staff had to go. At the Fund, only the accountant and personnel officer were left on a temporary basis.

<sup>42/</sup>

This was a slight exaggeration since both chief executives were allowed to retain at least a skeleton staff. In any case, former senior staff had the right to apply for any of the posts about to be advertised and would then be considered along with the other applicants. The task of recruiting a new professional staff was entrusted to a committee comprising the Executive Secretary (as Chairman), assisted by the Managing Director of the Fund, and other members nominated by the Council. This committee would interview candidates short-listed by their respective governments, and would then present a final list for the approval of the next Council of Ministers, scheduled to meet in Dakar in November 1978.

#### Fourth Ministerial Intervention, November 1978

This Special Recruitment Committee met and did, apparently, present a slate of candidates for confirmation by the Council, in November.<sup>43/</sup> That slate was finally accepted after Ministers reached a consensus, which was the only available means to provide the Community with the staff to implement decisions on harmonisation of customs tariffs, mobility of labour, and the sectors to receive priority in development.

No sooner was the compromise effected than it was overturned by the action of the Liberian delegate who expressed strong reservations, with the result that the problem was referred for final determination, under Article 6 of the Treaty, to the Authority of Heads of State and Government.<sup>44/</sup> Subsequent efforts failed to persuade the Liberian Minister to withdraw his opposition to the proposed new appointments within the Fund and the Secretariat. The work of the Special Recruitment Committee had, therefore, to be suspended, leaving the Community once more without effective permanent staff.

The problems within the Council were evidently not unrelated to the controversy about appointments at the Board, both past and present, and were mainly prompted by countries sympathetic to Dr.Horton and his stand. Some of the smaller and less developed states were also emphatic about the need for the Recruitment Committee to include geographical spread among the principal criteria for appointment, in addition to 'competence' and 'equitable distribution'. Apparently there were some complaints, too, that Nigeria and Ghana were both over-represented on the existing staff of the Community, while it was alleged that the Francophone states were being discriminated against in the matter of appointments.

The leading Francophone states do not, however, seem to have shared that view. In any case, despite the slight preponderance of professional staff from the Anglophone countries, under the initial staffing arrangements, it has also to be said that the English-speaking states had a much larger total population, while the question of recruitment from the Francophone states was complicated by the smaller number of applicants from those countries, reflecting different levels of educational attainment as well as the shortage of senior administrative staff within most Francophone states, often leading to higher levels of remuneration there than was possible in ECOWAS, itself.

Nevertheless, at some important levels of administration within the Community, French-speaking officials actually outnumbered their English-speaking colleagues, although the first consideration of all was with the advancement of the Community and the peoples that it served. <sup>45/</sup> Among the

junior staff the situation was different again, as the host countries, Nigeria and Togo, the one English and the other French-speaking, enjoyed disproportionate representation - but for reasons that were obvious to everyone, particularly in the early years of the Community, while awaiting implementation of the protocols on mobility of labour and freedom of residence.

The failure of the Council to accept the recommendations of the Recruitment Committee, or even to agree a procedure for future appointments, was all the more regrettable as it was quite unnecessary. Respect for competence and efficiency are not necessarily incompatible with considerations of 'equitable' or 'balanced' representation, while countries where there are opportunities for formal education cannot be denied a share in the administration of the Community and can, in any case, contribute personnel with much-needed practical experience, familiar with the economic problems and needs of their own communities.

What is difficult, of course, is to apply such criteria in assessing and selecting candidates, but that is a matter for those entrusted with the task and should certainly not become the responsibility of the Council of Ministers, itself - let alone the Authority. Disregarding that principle, the Fourth Council of Ministers in Dakar found itself in an impossible situation where no appointments to ECOWAS could be made. The only solution was either to refer the matter upwards, to the Authority, distorting the original division of functions, or else to return powers of appointment and promotion to the chief executives, themselves - which ran

counter to the decision of the Third Council that, in the interests of efficiency, all staff should be recruited by a Central Appointments and Promotions Board.

A large minority of Ministers seems nevertheless to have favoured a proposal allowing the Executive Secretary and the Managing Director a free hand to recruit their own staff. In the event the Central Appointments and Promotions Board was requested to stress "geographical balance" which at least had the merit of recognising the need for the widest possible participation and representation in Community affairs. <sup>46/</sup>

Another achievement of the Council meeting in Dakar, in November, contributing to a more coherent and more efficient administration, was the establishment of a Permanent Committee on Research and Studies, which would in future process all projects and make appropriate recommendations to the Council. Thus, neither the Secretariat nor the Fund would be permitted to entertain any project that had not first been sanctioned by the Council of Ministers. The Council also laid down a specific order of priorities to govern the future development of the Community.

The retiring Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Professor (Dr.) Adegboye, evidently resisted the temptation to give an account of his stewardship, preferring to remind his audience of the need to translate "self-reliance" into more practical terms, if it was to have any real or lasting effect. He spoke of their having laid "a solid foundation for the gigantic superstructure that ECOWAS is destined to be. We have built

those institutions capable of sustaining its steady growth." They could not pretend to "have resolved all problems of structure within the organisation", but with the kind of good will demonstrated in the past he was confident that they could meet any challenges the future might bring. And he spoke for all the ECOWAS governments in insisting that it was now time to turn from structural matters "to begin the actual work of development." <sup>47/</sup>

#### Dakar Summit, May 1979 : the Authority Intervenes

Where the Ministers in Dakar had engineered a situation requiring intervention by the Authority, the Chairman of the latter, General Obasanjo, was understandably reluctant to summon a Summit for the purpose of arbitrating in the appointment of clerks, secretaries and professional personnel. He was advised, however, by the Executive Secretary that "the structural and related problems which have plagued the smooth operation of ECOWAS are still confronting us", although "some progress had been made." <sup>48/</sup> He did, therefore, agree to discuss the question of relations between Fund and Secretariat with the chief executives of both institutions. When this approach proved unsuccessful, and reports indicated that the difficulties originated mainly with the Managing Director of the Fund, the Nigerian Head of State had little option but to communicate directly with the Liberian Government.

All the indications, however, were that Dr. Horton still enjoyed the confidence of his government which was unwilling, therefore, to withdraw and replace him. Nigeria now had the 'alternative' of leaving the Community she had helped to found, or of remaining within the Community

but at the same time increasing pressure for the adoption of more rational administrative procedures. However, no responsible Nigerian leader ever envisaged his country would leave ECOWAS, for which there was, in any case, no adequate or effective substitute. The second strategy had the dual merit of being consistent with the goal of regional union and of offering the quickest and best way out of the administrative impasse. Nigeria could simply withdraw its participation from the Fund, refusing to make further payments until the problems of that body were discussed at the next meeting of the Authority. A decision by the Authority concerning the management of the Fund would then relieve the Liberian Government of the embarrassment of having themselves to intervene to replace their original nominee.

That this strategy was, to some extent, effective, was apparent from the Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fund, in January 1979, when the Managing Director was advised to concentrate his efforts on obtaining full payment by member states of their contributions. As of November 30, 1978, only six states had paid their full contribution, while three others had made no contribution at all. Nigeria had provided over one-third of the Fund's capital to date, although a third of the Nigerian contribution was also outstanding. <sup>49/</sup>

The Board was also more assertive on other matters. In the matter of Community projects, the Board instructed the Managing Director to make contact with the Executive Secretary; regarding the investment of resources, he was invited to take account of the criteria of profitability, liquidity, security and the quality of services likely to be rendered by the selected establishments; he was also instructed not to renew the Fund's contracts with the existing consultants and to be more cautious in future in engaging foreign consultants for urgent assignments. <sup>50/</sup>



In the Spring of 1979 preparations began for the forthcoming Summit and the preceding Council of Ministers, due to be held in Dakar, in May. In his report to the Chairman of the Authority, Dr. Ouattara advised that the Summit should deal with the urgent problem of providing the Community with the necessary human and financial resources to enable it to operate. In his view the survival of the Community and the continued support of member states were dependent on a decision to re-shape the Community.<sup>51/</sup> And on March 21, 1979, General Obasanjo issued invitations to the other Heads of State to attend the Dakar Summit on 28-29 May.

Meanwhile the new Chairman of the Council of Ministers, M. Ousmane Seck of Senegal, and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Fund, M. Isidore Amoussou, from Benin (Dahomey) attempted a final series of initiatives in an attempt to resolve the impasse over administrative appointments. On April 8 they were notified that Liberia had withdrawn its previous reservations concerning the proposed appointments, but Guinea then wrote to the Executive Secretary confirming that it, too, now had reservations. Further efforts to harmonise the positions of the Executive Secretary and the Managing Director were likewise unsuccessful.

More conclusive were the separate reports of the Financial Controller and of the External Auditor, particularly concerning the activities of the Managing Director and the operations of the Fund. In March 1979 the Financial Controller issued three separate reports, all strongly critical of the Managing Director and the operation of the Fund.<sup>52/</sup> The report of the External Auditor, in April 1979, was even more pointed in its carefully considered recommendations.<sup>53/</sup> Regarding the administration of the Fund it noted the requirement, under Article 26 (1) of the Protocol

that the Board of Directors should meet at least once a quarter or more frequently if necessary, and observed that "the present practice is for the Board of Directors to meet as infrequently as possible." (Paragraph 56 of the Report). Concerning appointments, "staff grading and annual increments should not be determined by the unilateral decision of the Managing Director." (Paragraph 49). The accounts of the Fund, moreover, revealed "evidence of wantonness in certain areas of expenditure. The criterion seems to be not the ethics of the expenditure but the availability of budget." (Paragraph 45).

This report was even more penetrating in its comments on the continuing absence of liaison between the Secretariat and the Fund. "The absence of expeditious means of communications between the two Institutions would appear to be one of the major sources of misunderstanding between the Executive Secretariat and the Managing Director." (Paragraph 48). A radio link was suggested as one possible remedy (Paragraph 33). The next paragraph of the Report upheld the previous decision of the Authority.

The office of Executive Secretary must become a Department on its own and the pivot of authority in the Community. The Executive Secretary must be seen to be unquestionably accepted as the Chief Executive of the Community. Unless this concept is firmly established now, there can be no reasonable assurance of the success and the prosperity of the Community as conceived. This has become glaringly clear to us during the course of our audit at the Secretariat in Lagos and the Fund in Lomé.

Finally, the External Auditor warned of the deteriorating administrative situation within the Community and its probable consequences unless checked in the near future.

Although it is not for us as External Auditors to get concerned with the politics of the Community it is obvious to us that cracks are beginning to appear in the administration as persons in key positions are being accused of favouring staff of their own nationality. Insignificant or 'normal' as this may seem in our accepted way of life, we think that we have a duty to draw the attention of the Community to this situation which if unchecked at this early stage could become the anathema of the administration of the Community sooner or later. 55/

Aware that opinion within the Community was hardening against him, and that his continuing appointment was now in serious doubt, Dr. Horton again attempted to influence leaders by his statements to the Fifth Board of Directors, meeting in Dakar in April 1979. He concluded his opening address with the comment : "We are now ready to move", and noted that a large sum in arrears had been paid to the Fund in the second half of the previous year. 56/ Mention was also made of a speech given in Monrovia at a state banquet by the new Head of State in Ghana, General F. Akuffo. In February 1979 Akuffo had apparently stated that:

ECOWAS remains as the only organ capable of fostering cooperation on a real sub-regional scale. ECOWAS has our total support. We are happy to have an able son of Liberia, Dr. A. Romeo Horton, as Managing Director of the ECOWAS Fund for Cooperation and Development (sic.) We are confident that under his direction the Fund will make ECOWAS truly responsive to the economic needs of the sub-region. 57/

Past differences with the Secretariat, Dr. Horton maintained, had been resolved at the Lagos Summit in April 1978 and were now a matter of history. The many troubles that had beset ECOWAS since 1976 had now been "successfully ended and the organisation was on course and moving ahead." Lack of staff would cease to be a problem once the Authority had met and given a final ruling on the matter. The meetings in Dakar could therefore be expected "to record dramatic progress". Meanwhile the Fund was "especially interested in projects of a multi-national nature, the encouragement of economic integration being one of the Fund's primary purposes. At present they were looking at telecommunications, transport and food production. <sup>58/</sup>

At Dakar, in May 1979, the Council of Ministers reported to the Authority on the unsatisfactory state of affairs within the institutions of the Community - as confirmed by the submissions of the Financial Controller and the External Auditor. The Council complained once again of the absence of cooperation among the principal officials, and of the resulting misunderstandings compounded frequently by acts of indiscipline and a failure to assert authority. The Ministers then appealed to the Authority, as the one body able to intervene and thereby provide a new lease of life for the Community's operations. They called for the installation of new officials at the top who would command the respect of all and would ensure the implementation of the Community's objectives. <sup>59/</sup>

This last recommendation, that the Authority should remove the Executive Secretary as well as the Managing Director, would hardly

fail to offend Dr.Ouattara's supporters, particularly as all the available evidence pointed to the Managing Director as the one senior official who had failed repeatedly to comply with the letter as well as the spirit of the Treaty and its accompanying Protocols. When the Heads of State and Government assembled in Dakar, on May 28-29, it was reported, nevertheless, that there was criticism - in their absence - of the two chief executives, accompanied by suggestions that both should resign.

It is possible that the campaign against Dr. Ouattara was intended to relieve the mounting pressure on the Liberian President for a unilateral decision removing the Managing Director from his post. If both executive officers were removed by the Authority's express decision, then President Tolbert would be spared a painful and difficult decision. It is possible, too, that Dr. Ouattara had become the target for supporters of Dr.Horton, who were now reluctant to acknowledge his administrative shortcomings, and viewed the Executive Secretary as a convenient scape-goat. Others, again, may have been genuinely dissatisfied with some aspects of the Secretary's administration, or simply wished to project a new, more positive image of the Community, by replacing the existing officials with others who had had no part in the previous quarrels.

One can nevertheless readily appreciate the motives that may have led President Houphouët-Boigny to resist such pressures, bearing in mind that he had never, at any time, solicited any office for his country in the Community, while the Ivory Coast was, after Nigeria, the second largest contributor to the ECOWAS budget and to Fund. This may help to account for reports that the Ivory Coast would be compelled to withdraw from the Community

should it demand the resignation of the Executive Secretary. As a result the original proposal was dropped while criticism again focussed on the person of the Managing Director until, in statesmanlike fashion, President Tolbert agreed to withdraw him from the Fund. <sup>60/</sup>

The Summit then proceeded to define, once and for all, the precise relationship between the Secretariat and the other agencies of the Community. In the words of the President of Mali, as reported in West Africa:

We decided not only to remove the Managing Director of the Fund from his post - because of the mistakes he had made - but also to re-examine the structures of our organisation in order to make it more operational and effective.

<sup>61/</sup>

Once again the Summit confirmed that the Executive Secretary was the head of the Community's administration with an operational unit based in Lome for the proper management of the Fund's resources. To ensure centralisation of authority and decision-making the Authority declared that the Fund "is the financial instrument for the implementation of Community policies". <sup>62/</sup> However, no formal statement was issued after the meeting while Dr. Horton's withdrawal was not mentioned in the communiqué.

It would appear that, at this crucial point in the Community's development, with the decision to freeze tariff and non-tariff barriers over the next two years, pending their eventual elimination, the Heads of State

were justifiably anxious to avoid any public display of disagreement or ill-feeling. There was an obvious need for team-work if the Community was to tackle its most ambitious task to date with any prospect of success.

Hence the decision by the Liberian Government the following year, to replace Dr. Horton with a nominee, acceptable to the other leaders, distinguished in his own right and prepared to respect the rules and conventions within which the Fund had to operate. Mr. Robert Tubman, a son of the former Liberian President, and a deputy Minister of Justice, in the Liberian Government, was believed to combine academic talent, considerable business experience and a practical knowledge of legal forms and administrative procedures. On his appointment, in February, 1980, he gave an interview clearly setting out his own future position.

There apparently was a misconception surrounding the instruments of the Fund. This has now been cleared and I have studied the amended version. I shall be running the Fund strictly on this basis. That is to say, the Fund is the instrument for the implementation of the Community's policies. Therefore, I shall be there to execute these as given to me. <sup>63/</sup>

There was an unexpected irony in the fact that, shortly afterwards, the Liberian Government was replaced following a *coup d'etat*, while the next Summit of ECOWAS, in June 1980, would see the temporary exclusion of the new Liberian leader, Master-Sergeant Doe. His government, in turn, suspended all obligations to ECOWAS "until its rights are restored" and pending recognition of the new regime in Monrovia by the other West African states. <sup>64/</sup>

Meanwhile the problems of staffing that had threatened to cripple the Community were apparently resolved following a decision of the Authority

to proceed with the recruitment exercise largely on the basis of a quota system. According to criteria, approved by the Authority in July 1979, all future appointments within the Community would have to take account of the qualifications and experience of the applicants. Where there were candidates with relevant and otherwise comparable qualifications and experience, the distribution of professional posts should, as far as possible, reflect the composition of the Community as a whole. <sup>65/</sup>

Of the sixty-five posts previously approved by the Council of Ministers, fifty-two were retained by the Authority, and thirty-nine of these were promptly filled by the above means. <sup>66/</sup> It was hoped that the Community would before long be able to appoint to the remaining thirteen posts. Where feasibility studies and the implementation of projects had previously been hampered by the absence of permanent staff, this was no longer a problem. ECOWAS was now set to make up for time lost during the previous years. In the words of the Executive Secretary, "We are determined to make 1980 a year of all round success." <sup>67/</sup>



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50. Report, of the Deliberations of the Fourth Board of Directors of the ECOWAS Fund in Dakar, dated 1 February 1979.
51. Memorandum, to the Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority from the Executive Secretary, ECOWAS, 14 December 1978.
52. There were (1) the Interim Report on the Function of Consultants and the Fund; (2) Memorandum on the Recruitment of Temporary Staff pending a Decision by the Council of Ministers on the Report of the General Appointment Committee; and (3) Memorandum concerning the Managing Director of the Fund and his Entourage on Tour, March 13-April 8, 1979. The Managing Director published his Comments on the Financial Controller's Report, 19 March 1979.  
 "Among the more serious allegations leveled against the Director of Fund were mismanagement and excessive spending. One accusation brought before the Summit concerned a journey by the Managing Director across West Africa and most of the Major European Capitals with an express purpose of conferring with the Chairman of the Board of Directors, who lived less than two hours drive from Lomé and the Secretary, Dr. Ouattara, who lived in nearby Lagos. The matter, according to the Financial Controller of the Community, was one which he tried to forestall by pointing out its irregularities and also by requesting the Chairman to recall the Director of the Fund from the trip. Nothing came out of these warnings."  
West Africa, 25 February 1980.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont.

53. External Auditor's Report, Audit of 1977 and 1978. Accounts of both the Secretariat and the Fund, 19 April 1979.
54. Ibid. Para 34 (p.7).
55. Ibid., Para.56 (p.12).
56. West Africa, 19 March 1979. According to Dr. Horton, within a period of six months, (July-November 1978), a total of \$12m. in arrears was paid in by five states. West Africa, 19 March 1979. By April Dr. Horton was indicating that all but two countries had paid something towards the Capital Fund.  
 "Many had paid all they owed, including Togo, Guinea, Benin, Niger and Sierra Leone. Nigeria had paid 50% of her share - which meant she had paid more than anyone else. Nigeria's total share amounts to 32% of the total." West Africa, 9 April 1979.
57. West Africa, 19 May 1979.
58. Ibid.
59. This time the Council seems to have set aside the recommendations of the Special Appointments and Promotions Committee in favour of a decision authorising the Executive Secretary and the Managing Director of the Fund to make their own separate appointments to the Secretariat and the Fund "and then meet and attempt to harmonise as and when necessary." They were asked to stress "geographical balance". Memorandum from the Executive Secretary, ECOWAS, to the Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority, concerning the Outcome of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers at Dakar, 2-4 May 1979.
60. West Africa, 25 February 1980. (Houphouët-Boigny threatened to withdraw his country from the Community; criticism of the two Chief Executives of ECOWAS; President Tolbert withdraws Dr. Horton).
61. West Africa, 11 June 1979.
62. West Africa, 25 February 1980.
63. Ibid.
64. West Africa, 2 June 1980.
65. The principle for future recruitment of ECOWAS Staff were based on a quarter system with due allowance for qualifications and recorded experience. They were approved by the Chairman of the Authority and circulated among the Member States by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, 10 July 1979.
66. Ibid.
67. West Africa, 25 February 1980.

## CHAPTER 13

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ECOWAS PROTOCOLS, 1977-82

The prolonged controversy over the ECOWAS institutions did not prevent the Community from making progress with other matters, notably the protocols providing eventually for free movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment, for a non-aggression pact, and for a freeze on tariff and non-tariff barriers, to begin in May 1979 and extend over the next two years - prior to the progressive reduction of existing tariff levels. But the ability of ECOWAS to function successfully and meet its various objectives depended in the first place on the availability of Community finance and, initially at least, this could come from only one source : the contributions of those who had earlier created ECOWAS. In many respects the funding of the Community was a more delicate and difficult problem than the original political decision to set up the organisation.

#### 1. Financing the Community

Paragraph 1 of Article 54 of the ECOWAS Treaty required that the mode by which the contributions of member states shall be determined and the currencies in which member states shall pay their contributions to the Budget of ECOWAS shall be prescribed in a Protocol to be annexed to the Treaty. It was in compliance with this directive that the said protocol was prepared, considered and approved by the Council of Ministers in November 1976, and later signed by the Heads of State and Government on November 5, and subsequently ratified by member states. <sup>1/</sup>

It was obvious that the principal organs of the Community, the Secretariat and the Fund, would endeavour to extract as much as possible by way of contributions from member states. However, while member states would wish to see the Community's operations adequately financed, they would also try to cut the cost to themselves. From the protracted discussions on this subject it was clear that most states were of the view that the more prosperous ones, namely Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Ghana and Senegal, should shoulder most of the responsibility for providing the necessary financial backing for the Community. In my private discussions with most of my West African colleagues, just before the signing of the Treaty, this view was widespread - with the inference that Nigeria and, to some degree, the Ivory Coast, should shoulder the greater part of the Community's financial burden.

President Houphouët-Boigny had also expressed that conviction both in private and in public - as in the discussion of the proposed Treaty on May 27, 1975, when he argued that "... the wealthier a state, the more it would contribute". Also that "provision should be made for financial and technical assistance to the poorer states ... to help them develop their economies through the provision of experts ... and trained personnel." <sup>2/</sup>

In our private discussions I had agreed with such suggestions, indicating that "Nigeria would never be selfish and would contribute as much as possible to see that poorer countries in the sub-region were adequately catered for." <sup>3/</sup>

A number of states therefore demanded a formula that would provide generously for the needs of the Community and its institutions, with contributions coming disproportionately from the richer states. This formula would be based on a coefficient of the GNP of member states. If accepted, this would have meant that Nigeria and the Ivory Coast, in particular, would be called on to bear the brunt of all contributions to the Community and the capital budget of the Fund. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that the countries most directly affected resisted the demand and proposed an alternative formula based on a coefficient of Gross Domestic Product - which would distribute the burden rather more equitably.

What was finally agreed to, and later approved by the Authority of the Community, was the formula contained in Article 5.1 of the Protocol relating to the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development, and in Article 11.2 and 11.3 of the Protocol relating to the contributions by member states to the Budget of the ECOWAS. The formula for assessing contributions to the Fund is identical with that for the Budget of the Community and is defined as follows:

The Contribution of each Member State shall be assessed on the basis of a coefficient which takes into account the Gross Domestic Product and the Per Capita Income of all member states. For this purpose, the coefficient shall be calculated as one-half of the ratio of the Gross Domestic Product of each Member State to the total Gross Domestic Product of all Member States plus one-half of the ratio of the Per Capita Income of each Member State to the total Per Capita Income of all Member States. 4/

It is expressed in the algebraic equation:

$$C = \frac{1}{2} \text{ of } \frac{\text{GDP of State}}{\text{GDP of all States}} + \frac{1}{2} \frac{\text{PCI of State}}{\text{PCI of all States}}$$

$$\text{Or, } C = \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{a}{x} \right) + \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{b}{y} \right)$$

Where  
 C = Coefficient that is to serve as a basis for all contributions;  
 a = GDP of the State;  
 x = GDP of the Combined States;  
 b = PCI of the State;  
 y = PCI of the Combined States.

ECOWAS Funds would therefore come from contributions to be divided on the basis of members economic strength, assessed as a factor of GNP and population. The inclusion of the Per Capita Income was a reminder that Nigeria, despite its apparent prosperity, remained one of the poorer states of the region because of its large population. At Lomé, Nigeria had proposed as an alternative, a coefficient to be based one-third on GDP and two-thirds on PCI, although she later withdrew her opposition and supported the formula finally adopted. <sup>5/</sup> The statistics and other data used are to be published by the United Nations and a further safeguard was the inclusion in the Protocol of provision for a review every three years of the information on which contributions are to be assessed. Depending on its current economic performance a state might therefore expect to see its contributions rise or fall.

It is clear that the Fund would prefer IMF-approved convertible currencies, but there is provision for contributions to be made in any "acceptable" currency. This is to provide for countries, like Guinea, whose own currency is not easily convertible in world markets.



TABLE 6

FUND  
STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBER STATES AS AT NOVEMBER 30, 1978 In US \$  
SITUATION DE CONTRIBUTIONS DES STATS MEMBERS AU 30 NOVEMBRE 1978

Name of Country/ Paye	Ratio %	CONTRIBUTIONS		Total Contributions	Payment/Paiements		Balance Due/Solde Du		Total Due
		Capital	Budget		Capital	Budget	1978 Capital	1978 Budget	
1. BENIN	3.0	1,500.001	26.150	1,559.162	1,500.001	26.150	-	-	-
2. GAMBIA	2.6	1,300.000	22.864	1,351.274	-	-	1,300.000	22.664	1,351.274
3. GHANA	12.9	6,449.979	112.443	6,704.371	1,000.000	112.443	5,449.979	-	5,591.928
4. GUINEA (C)	2.9	1,450.097	25.278	1,507.286	1,450.097	25.278	31.911	-	-
5. GUINEA (B)	1.5	750.00	13.075	779.581	750.000	13.075	-	-	16.506
6. IVORY COAST	13.0	6,499.978	113.315	6,756.342	6,241.740	113.315	143.049	-	258.238
7. LIBERIA	6.7	3,350.000	58.401	3,482.126	1,067.874	58.401	73.725	-	2,282.126
8. MALI	1.9	950.000	16.561	987.468	-	-	950.000	16.561	20.907
9. MAURITANIA	3.6	1,800.000	31.380	1,870.994	-	-	1,800.000	-	1,801.812
10. NIGER	2.1	1,050.000	18.304	1,091.412	1,050.000	18.304	23.108	-	-
11. NIGERIA	32.8	16,399.945	285.903	17,046.772	12,477.637	285.903	181.045	3,922.308	4,102.187
12. SENEGAL	5.4	2,700.000	47.069	2,806.489	1,307.586	47.069	59.420	1,392.414	1,392.414
13. SIERRA LEONE	4.4	2,200.000	38.353	2,286.770	2,200.000	38.353	48.417	-	-
14. TOGO	3.6	1,800.000	31.380	1,870.994	1,800.000	31.380	39.614	-	-
15. UPPER VOLTA	2.6	1,300.000	22.664	1,351.274	250.796	22.664	28.610	1,049.204	1,049.204
16. CAPE VERDE	1.0	500.000	8.717	519.720	250.000	8.717	-	250.000	261.003
TOTAL	100.0	50,000.000	871.657	51,972.035	31,345.731	832.432	666.701	18,654.269	19,094.160

With this formula settled, members' contributions are as indicated in the accompanying table (Table 6 ). Nigeria would contribute the most (nearly 33%) of the total, followed by the Ivory Coast and Ghana (with around 13% each), with Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Niger, Upper Volta and the Gambia contributing under three per cent. each. All other contributions i.e. Special Contributions, and those to the Compensation Budget, would follow the same pattern.

Like other multinational organisations, ECOWAS was dependent from the first not only on the good will but also on the contributions of member states - to the budget of the Secretariat and to the budget and paid-up capital of the Fund. While we considered the method of assessing contributions to be on the whole a reasonable one, we were also aware of the experience of other bodies, like the OAU, which had experienced great difficulty, at times, in collecting contributions when due. In a regional organisation, whose purpose was to promote development among states including many described as Least Developed States a shortfall in revenue was probably to be expected. For our member states the problems of under-development were compounded both by the drought, earlier in the decade, and more particularly by the global economic crisis after 1973.

Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde were a special case in view of their recent independence and the dislocation of their economy after the successful but devastating war of liberation against the Portuguese. In July 1977 the Council of Ministers therefore agreed that Guinea-Bissau should only be asked to meet at least half of its contribution to the Fund, was relieved of further contributions to the Community for the next two years. Its contributions would be shared among the other states.

With the exception of Niger, the Sahel states seem to have had difficulty meeting their financial targets although these had been deliberately set low. As we have seen the more prosperous coastal states had expected from the first to have to meet a substantial proportion of the Community's costs, with Nigeria, the Ivory Coast and Ghana being asked to contribute just under sixty per cent. of the income of the Fund and a similar proportion of the budget of the Secretariat. Nigeria's share alone was just under a third of the total. In the event, because Ghana, Liberia and some of the Sahel states were behind in their contributions to the Community Fund, Nigeria's payments amounted to almost forty per cent. of the total subscribed by November 30, 1978. Nigeria and the Ivory Coast alone met sixty per cent. of the capital requirements of the Fund in the first two years of its existence. The same two states subscribed forty-five per cent. of the budget of the Secretariat in 1977 and forty-six per cent. the following year. (Table 6)

There was a noticeable decline in contributions between the 1977 and 1978 financial years which may have reflected growing financial embarrassment on the part of member-states, or even some reduction in their initial enthusiasm for the Community. The unfortunate delay before the Community finally became operational no doubt disappointed many and may have discouraged some. As at September 30, 1977, less than a quarter of all contributions to the Secretariat were outstanding, while a year later the figure was nearly two-thirds. To some extent this may simply conceal the fact that states are often behind with their contributions, so that moneys contributed in one year may be used to meet arrears incurred earlier. (Tables 7 & 8)

TABLE 7

521a

SECRETARIAT

1977 BUDGETARY CONTRIBUTION POSITION AS AT  
30.9.77L'ETAT DES CONTRIBUTIONS BUDGETAIRES A LA  
DATE DU 30.9.77

Name of Country Pays	Ratio Proportion	Contribution \$ UA		Payment Paiement	Balance Due Solde Du \$
	%				
1. BENIN	2.9	104,194	89,900	-	104,194
2. GAMBIA	2.5	90,081	77,500	90,081	-
3. GHANA	12.5	450,407	387,500	450,407	-
4. GUINEA	2.8	100,891	86,800	100,891	-
5. GUINEA BISSAU	1.51	54,409	46,810	-	54,409
6. IVORY COAST	12.6	454,010	390,600	454,010	-
7. LIBERIA	6.5	234,212	201,500	234,212	-
8. MALI	1.9	68,462	58,900	-	68,462
9. MAURITANIA	3.5	126,114	108,500	112,445	13,669
10. NIGER	2.0	72,065	62,000	72,065	-
11. NIGERIA	31.9	1,149,438	988,900	1,149,438	-
12. SENEGAL	5.3	190,972	164,300	-	190,972
13. SIERRA LEONE	4.3	154,940	133,300	-	154,940
14. TOGO	3.5	126,114	108,500	126,114	-
15. UPPER VOLTA	2.5	90,081	77,500	-	90,081
16. CAPE VERDE	-	-	-	-	-
17. SUSPENSE	3.79	136,563	117,490	-	136,563
		3,602,933	3,100,000	2,789,663	813,290

TABLE 8

SECREPARIAT

1978 BUDGETARY CONTRIBUTION POSITION  
AS AT 30.9.78

L'ETAT DES CONTRIBUTIONS BUDGETAIRES A LA  
DATE DU 30.9.78

Name of Country Pays	Proportion %	Contribution \$ U.A.	Payment Paie ment	Balance Due Solde Du \$
1. BENIN	3.03	65,661	54,718	-
2. GAMBIA	2.63	56,992	47,494	56,992
3. GHANA	13.03	282,364	235,304	-
4. GUINEA	2.93	63,494	52,912	-
5. GUINEA BISSAU	1.51	32,722	27,269	16,449
6. IVORY COAST	13.13	284,532	237,110	314,875
7. LIBERIA	6.77	146,708	122,576	-
8. MALI	1.92	41,607	34,673	-
9. MAURITANIA	3.64	78,879	65,733	-
10. NIGER	2.12	45,940	38,284	-
11. NIGERIA	33.13	717,939	598,283	848,517
12. SENEGAL	5.45	118,104	98,420	-
13. SIERRA LEONE	4.44	96,216	80,180	-
14. TOGO	3.64	78,879	65,733	169,543
15. UPPER VOLTA	2.63	56,992	47,494	-
16. CAPE VERDE	-	-	-	-
		2,167,029	1,806,183	1,406,376
				1,012,238

CREDITORS TO BE CARRIED FORWARD TO 1979  
CREANCIERS REPORTEES A 1979

NIGERIA	\$130,578
TOGO	\$ 90,664
IVORY COAST	\$ 30,343
GAMBIA	\$ 13,917
	<u>\$265,502</u>

Nevertheless, this could not by itself explain the fact that on November 30, 1978, the Fund's Budget was under-subscribed by thirty-six per cent., while the capital budget was under-subscribed by a similar figure. (Table 6). It seems probable that, as the quarrel between the Executive Secretary and the Managing Director of the Fund continued, a number of states either withheld part of their payments to both bodies, or subscribed to one agency in preference to the other.

At one stage the financial position of the Secretariat was so serious that Nigeria agreed a loan of a half million Naira (\$750,000) interest free. When this sum was finally exhausted the overall position with respect to contributions had scarcely improved. In Part V of the Executive Secretary's Report for 1980-81 attention was drawn to the increasingly difficult economic situation of the countries in the region and the problem this created for the Community's institutions.

At moments such as this, every nation-state seeks to protect itself against any external factors that do not bring relief but are rather capable of worsening the domestic situation. There is also the tendency to resort to ad hoc and short-term remedial measures and to heavily discount any activities that hold the promise of only long-term returns ... It is possible that there would be moments when Member States would waver and be tempted to meet domestic pressing problems rather than devote the same resources or even attention to Community needs. If we should fall into that temptation, we shall only be prolonging the difficult period of transition from a set of fragmented, individualistic and isolated under-developed economies into a unified, strong and viable economy.

6/

More welcome news was the announcement in May, 1982, that the new regime of Ft.Lt.J.J.Rawlings in Ghana, despite its many economic problems, had decided to pay all its backlog of contributions to the Community, including its full

share of the Fund's initial capital call - and to make payment in a convertible currency, namely CFA francs. <sup>7/</sup> This was interpreted as an act of faith both in the Ghanaian economy and in the ECOWAS idea, and recalled Ghana's long and often close association with the cause of African unity.

Countries will subscribe the more readily to organisations that provide tangible benefits and useful services. This was why the founding fathers preferred to concentrate on a narrow range of objectives, which could be completed with available resources and within a fairly short period of time. After the intervening difficulties, this seems to have been the view taken by the Authority at the end of the 'seventies and it is to be hoped that it will lead to a rejuvenation of the Community and its institutions and that the problem of contributions, although it will not quickly be solved, will not prevent the Community from successfully pursuing its initial goals.

In this regard it was encouraging to note that "since matters came to a head at the Dakar Summit in 1979, Fund-Secretariat relations have vastly improved, and that institutional relations are now functional." <sup>8/</sup> Not only did the Fund receive authorisation from the Fifth Summit, in Cotonou, in May 1982, to start work on its new headquarters, but it was now in a position to finance its first project, a \$25 m. communications network, that will be welcome throughout the region. <sup>9/</sup>

## 2. Trade Liberalisation

Trade liberalisation was a major objective of the ECOWAS Community, with provision eventually for a customs union, a common external

tariff and a free trade area comprising all member states. At the inception of ECOWAS levels of intra-Community trade were fairly uniformly low, although higher among the Francophone states who were also members of the CEAO. (Tables 2, & 3). It was hoped, however, to be able to boost trade within the Community, not only by dismantling the barriers that had long helped to promote a widespread and illicit cross-border traffic - to the detriment of national revenues - but also by active measures of trade promotion and by a well planned programme of industrial location, designed to foster the exchange of goods, materials and labour among and between member states.

It has always been the view of the Nigerian government that the Community should go beyond mere liberalisation of trade and create the conditions in member states that would favour greater integration. General Obasanjo was clearly of a similar mind in December 1978:

After all, how much trade could be liberalised at present since inter-state trade within ECOWAS was still minimal? Industries and projects should be created that would spill over national boundaries by seeking out raw materials, labour and markets from within the Community.

10/

Certainly the effective implementation of trade liberalisation was expected to give a valuable stimulus to investment, as well as encouraging cooperation in productive ventures and generally assisting in the formulation of other measures to expand production.

At no time, however, did we in ECOWAS underestimate the many, seemingly intractable problems that would be involved at almost every stage of the scheme. While other regional communities have proposed



similar measures, implementation has usually been a slow and often painful process, and the results have often been disappointing.<sup>11</sup>/

Only in the Central American Common Market were tariffs in the zone completely abolished. The result was an encouraging increase in trade, but the experiment was shortlived as customs duties were replaced by the unilateral imposition of fiscal incentives, culminating in the withdrawal of Honduras.

Where the East African Community had a common tariff, member countries had different policies regarding duty drawbacks on machinery and equipment. The Central African Customs Union (UDEAC) boasts a common tariff, but additional taxes may be imposed by individual member states, while differential tax rates also introduce a protective element into intra-zone trade. Within the Francophone West African Community (CEAO), trade in agricultural commodities was free of internal duties but tariffs on manufactured goods remained the subject of detailed negotiation.

The elimination of tariffs within ECOWAS would undoubtedly pose serious problems for those states, the majority, who depended on duties as an important source of revenue. According to UN figures, in 1973 the Gambia derived 35% of total government revenue from customs duties; in Benin the proportion was 55%, while it was scarcely lower in Upper Volta (45%), and constituted 30.9% of revenue in Sierra Leone and 19.4% in the Ivory Coast. (Table 9).

TABLE 9

IMPORT DUTIES AS PROPORTION OF REVENUE FOR ECOWAS  
COUNTRIES

(Selected Years)

Country	Year	Import Duties as % of Revenues	Remarks	
1. Dahomey (Benin) (cc)	1971	55.0%		
2. The Gambia (cc)	1973	35.0%		
3. Ghana (cc)	1973	10.4% *	*The poor economic state of the country does not allow or encourage imports into the country by both Ghana itself & exporting countries. Ivory Coast allows capital goods importation at a low duty to encourage industrialisation. Monrovia is a Free port and imports to Liberia are generally low.	
4. Ivory Coast (cc)	1973	19.4%		
5. Liberia (cc)	1973	18.9%		
6. Mauritania (cc)	1973	26.7%		
7. Niger (LLC)	1973	10.5% **		
8. Nigeria (cc)	1973	18.3%		
9. Senegal (cc)	1968	43.4%	** The reason for this is - (1) Duty free importation, esp.of capital goods to encourage industrialisation and business	
10. Sierra Leone (cc)	1973	30.9%	(2) Excessive smuggling of goods from their over 2,000 mile borders. Nigeria had a low rate of import duties on capital goods to encourage industrialisation. She also cut down on heavy goods & encouraged local production.	
11. Togo (cc)	1973	19.9%	***	*** Togo's Port, Lome, is a Free port, import duties are low and this encouraged the great use of the port from various West African countries.
12. Upper Volta	1973	45.0%		
13. Guinea (C) (cc)	Not Available			
14. Guinea (B) (cc)				
15. Mali (LLC)				
16. Cape Verde (cc)				

Source: African Statistical Year Book, Part 2, West Africa  
(New York : UN, 1975). Amended by the Author.

NB. LLC = Land Locked Countries.  
cc = Coastal Countries.

There was also the problem of harmonising and adapting the customs regulations and nomenclature in use in the various states. These were the legacy of three separate colonial administrations, with very different languages, standards of statistical compilation, and very different trading philosophies. Standardising nomenclature would itself fully occupy officials of the Community for some time before trade liberalisation could even begin. Meanwhile the remaining disparities had all to be reviewed, discussed and, where necessary, harmonised.

Finally, ten of the sixteen ECOWAS states were also members of other sub-regional groupings, including the CEAO, Mano River Union (MRU), and the Cape Verde/Guinea Bissau free trade area established as recently as 1976. Their objectives also included the elimination of tariffs on trade and provided in some cases for preferential treatment for goods originating in other member states. The Mano River Union presented few problems as integration had not yet advanced very far, while the member states were closely identified with the regional grouping and with its broader concerns.

The CEAO, however, had made tangible progress while ECOWAS was itself becoming operational. Both envisaged the creation of a customs union - after twelve years in the case of the CEAO, fifteen with ECOWAS - but only ECOWAS aimed at the establishment of a free trade area within the customs union. By 1982 the CEAO might have been able to achieve a 65 per cent tariff reduction but, unlike ECOWAS, it does not have a zero target. Only unprocessed, raw produce would pass freely between CEAO states, all other

goods being subject to a Regional Cooperation Tax (TCR), which might vary between states and was designed to supplement their revenues and compensate for generally lower levels of customs duty. Within ECOWAS, compensation was to be a matter for the Fund and would be regulated by protocol. Both communities, then, had provision for separate trade liberalisation programmes, with the risk of overlap and possible conflict.

Chapter III of the ECOWAS Treaty set out in some detail, the future trade liberalisation programme. The relevant "legal framework" as it emerged from successive Summit meetings in April 1978 (Lagos), May 1979 (Dakar), and May 1980 (Lome), envisaged a transitional period of eight years, from May 1981 until May 1989, for the realisation of a free trade area, and the elimination of all tariff barriers between member states, with the gradual establishment in the same period of a Common Customs Tariff in respect of goods imported from outside the Community. Under Article 14 of the Treaty they were required to align their internal tariffs with the Common Customs Tariff over a five year period, May 1988-May 1993.<sup>12/</sup>

But with immediate effect from May 28, 1981, the following were to be completely removed : tariffs on all unprocessed goods, on traditional handicrafts, and on industrial products from Community enterprises. Tariffs on priority industrial products imported into the four more advanced, and the twelve less advanced states, were to be shared out over four and six years respectively, also with effect from May 28, 1981. Tariffs on all other industrial products imported into the four more advanced and the twelve less advanced states would be eliminated over six and eight years respectively.<sup>13/</sup>

It was hoped that the elimination of these and other obstacles to trade within the region - supplemented by other more positive measures of trade promotion, would greatly enhance the chances - and increase the volume - of intra-Community trade. The Trade Liberalisation Programme was described as "undoubtedly the most important activity of the ECOWAS." To stimulate economic development, however, the removal of trade barriers would have to be "accompanied by the introduction of trade promotion and development measures." Here, unfortunately,

the sub-region trade though limited in volume faces a number of obstacles including lack of market intelligence, poor transport infrastructures, inconvertible currencies, differences in grading and standards, inefficiency of domestic market organisations, and preferential agreements with foreign overseas countries.

14/

It was obvious that the implementation of the trade liberalisation scheme would mean the loss of customs and other revenue for member states. Unless there was some provision for compensation, they would be unable to balance their budgets and meet their various commitments, domestic and external. Article 25 of the Treaty authorised the Council of Ministers to:

determine the compensations to be paid to a Member State which has suffered loss of import duties as a result of the application of this chapter.

The Council was also instructed to keep under constant review the industrial conditions within the region, with a view to locating disparities in the levels of industrial development of the Member States. The Council may then direct the appropriate Commission to recommend measures to remedy such disparities (Article 32). Whatever compensation was finally agreed would be forthcoming from the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development (Article 50). Article 52 authorised the Fund to:

provide compensation and other forms of assistance to Member States which have suffered losses arising out of the application of the provisions of this Treaty on the liberalisation of trade within the Community.

The detailed measures concerning compensation were set out in a separate Protocol that was finally agreed by all Member States in November 1976. It provided that compensation would be forthcoming only in the case of a loss of revenue incurred as a result of tariff reductions on imported industrial goods originating within the Community. The right to compensation would lapse five years after the loss was incurred. The amount of revenue lost would be calculated on the basis of the difference between the actual revenue collected using the preferential ECOWAS rates in any given year, and the revenue that would otherwise have been collected had the consolidated rates, applicable at May 28, 1979, been imposed instead. <sup>15/</sup>

Payments would be from a special Compensation Budget, equivalent, in any financial year, to the estimated compensation claims for that year. Contributions to and payments from the Budget by member states would be on the basis of a formula derived from their share of intra-Community trade as it related to individual products. Advance payments might be made up to an amount estimated at one-quarter of the total due to the member state for a given year. Finally, contributions to and payments out of the Compensation Budget would be made in convertible currency.

Apart from the provisions for compensation, the most vexed issues related, as before, to the definition of "rules of origin" that would identify the products to benefit from the new dispensations, and the definition of "community enterprise", which raised the question of ownership and indigenous participation. <sup>16/</sup> Other problems were largely administrative, but together these had helped delay implementation of

the trade liberalisation programme as a whole. An attempt was made, by means of a questionnaire, to assess the likely effect of trade liberalisation on those states that belonged to both the CEAO and to ECOWAS. Only one of the six states involved seems to have replied to the Secretariat although the information solicited was seen as indispensable to the successful implementation of the programme.

Member countries also failed to respond to repeated requests by the Secretariat for information concerning customs nomenclature and statistical standards. The printing and distribution of the new forms and procedures was due to be completed by July 1980, but countries had yet to submit details of their tariff schedules as late as November 1980.<sup>17/</sup> The Common Statistical Standards and Harmonised Customs Documents for the Community as a whole were nevertheless printed and circulated at the beginning of January 1981 so that trade liberalisation could commence on schedule in May of that year. The Executive Secretary's Report suggests, however, that on this issue member states did not share the same sense of urgency as the Community officials.

A mission was sent out to the Member States to assess the application of these documents which constitute an essential element in the implementation of the trade liberalisation programme.

It is regrettable to note that none of the reports received on the status of implementation by Member States of these Community policies and measures was encouraging. It appears that none of the documents enumerated above, which had to be introduced into use as a prerequisite for a smooth application of the trade liberalisation programme, has been effectively implemented by any Member State.<sup>18/</sup>

The trade liberalisation programme was the main issue at the May 1982 Summit, in Cotonou (Benin), as a result of a request from the CEAO and from the much smaller Mano River Union for the suspension of Article 20 of the Treaty, which provides for most-favoured nation treatment within the Community. The sub-regional groupings had previously submitted requests for "derogation" as early as July 1980 and these had been discussed by Officials and by Heads of Institutions of the ECOWAS and the two smaller communities. <sup>19/</sup>

In the absence of sufficiently detailed evidence in support of the requests, the matter was referred to a special derogation committee constituted at ministerial level. Its report, adopted by the Council of Ministers in Freetown, in November 1981, recommended the review of the different liberalisation schemes and compensation mechanisms proposed by the three bodies, and their simultaneous application for an interim period - during which studies would be undertaken concerning the harmonisation of internal taxation among member states and the establishment of a Common External Tariff. The special committee also recommended the "consolidation of current rates and list of products that constitute the CEAO and MRU trade preferential system" and the application of ECOWAS customs and statistical documents. <sup>20/</sup>

These recommendations had then to be considered by the Authority meeting in Cotonou in May 1982. Its decision was likely to be a critical one for the future of the Community. According to one experienced observer:

Article 20, with its implications of equality of treatment within ECOWAS has thus become the test-case clause of the Treaty, which could make or mar the application of the whole programme of trade liberalisation, without which moves towards harmonisation of tariffs and eventual customs union are going to lack conviction. <sup>21/</sup>



After some discussion, "during which the CEAO/ECOWAS problem was, according to conference sources, clearly exposed", the Authority chose to postpone the issue - "but not for long, as it were, because of the central nature of the trade issue in ECOWAS." The ministerial committee on derogation would be convened once more to re-examine the matter and make proposals for the next Council of Ministers meeting in Cotonou in November 1982. <sup>22/</sup>

It was not surprising that such an important matter as trade liberalisation among so many countries of such varied background should continue to create difficulties for ECOWAS. Dr. Ouattara's opinion of the Cotonou decision was nevertheless hopeful, since the Heads of State had shown a "political willingness to deal with the matter now and not to let it drag on unnecessarily." <sup>23/</sup> The Report of the Executive Secretary for 1980-81 also drew attention to the complexity of the programme, recalling that it had taken the much smaller CEAO some two years before its own common customs and statistical nomenclature had come into effect; the Mano River Union had taken more than two years and the EEC some two and a half years to agree their harmonised nomenclature. <sup>24/</sup>

It was clear from the Secretary's report that the liberalisation programme, officially approved at Lomé in May 1980, "is trembling on the brink of becoming operational." A beginning had been made. Already, tariffs on all unprocessed goods and traditional handicrafts should have been abolished. However, "it is with respect to industrial goods that a number of difficulties encountered have caused a delay in the implementation..."

Nevertheless, the list of priority industrial goods, which were to be liberalised faster than other industrial goods, had been adopted by ECOWAS ministers in November 1981, although not without reservations from three of the CEAO members. Existing non-tariff barriers had also been defined and classified in preparation for their eventual removal. <sup>25/</sup>

Moreover, in the course of the year a protocol on the definition of "community enterprises" was finally drafted, for approval by the Cotonou Summit. It was reported that the ministers of Ghana, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria had expressed reservations about some aspects of the protocol, while Upper Volta was critical of the protocol as a whole. <sup>26/</sup> When the Authority failed, however, to endorse the protocol at the Summit in May 1982, this was attributed to "technical rather than political reasons." <sup>27/</sup> Nevertheless, the effect was again to delay implementation of the provisions for free circulation of community enterprise products, originally scheduled for May 1981.

Although Cotonou produced no spectacular decisions and the trade liberalisation programme suffered a temporary postponement, the presence of some twelve Heads of State, along with two Prime Ministers (Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau) and two Ministers (Mali and the Gambia) was a tribute to the success of the Summit and to the enthusiasm that ECOWAS continues to evoke among member states. <sup>28/</sup> If there were obstacles to the programme they were not insurmountable; if some delay was inevitable, it need not be a protracted one.

Any problems in the relationship between the CEAO and ECOWAS did not adversely affect Nigeria's own relations with the Ivory Coast, whose

President intervened at Cotonou to persuade the conference that "the Community be responsible for financing the construction of the headquarters of the institutions." <sup>29/</sup> - thereby relieving Nigeria of its earlier commitment to financing the construction of the Secretariat buildings. The decision was timely given the economic and financial difficulties confronting Nigeria at the time. It had the merit of involving all sixteen countries in the construction of their new regional headquarters, but might also be interpreted as reneging on their earlier promise to provide the headquarters at their own expense. West Africa summed up the situation within ECOWAS following the Cotonou Summit.

There are many remarkable aspects to the ECOWAS experiment. It now has a comprehensive set of programmes and increasingly operational institutions. But people could still ask, with justification, has it done anything? Does it not still exist much more on paper than in reality?

Welding 16 disparate countries together is no easy task, and the road is still a long one, but there were many in Cotonou who felt that the time for action was at last arriving, and that ECOWAS, for its own good, could not remain much longer in the words of our correspondent, "trembling on the brink."

30/

#### Free Movement of Persons and Rights of Residence and Establishment

The idea of unrestricted movement throughout West Africa is not a new one. There was considerable mobility of populations before colonial rule while, under the colonial regime, there was, as Professor C.M.B.Brann has pointed out, free movement of professional elites within the territories administered by each power. <sup>31/</sup> Nigeria, always a major

employer of external manpower, if only by reason of its size and population, attracted many lawyers, teachers and civil servants from Sierra Leone and Ghana. Likewise, Dahomeans furnished a disproportionate number of cadres who had helped administer the French West African Federation (AOF). Foulah pastoralists crossed the frontiers of the three colonial powers, as did Hausa and other traders, while Ghanaian fishermen settled on the Bights of Bonny and Benin.

Such patterns of migration attested to the economic unity of the region and to the artificiality of the colonial enclaves wherein trade, labour and communications were reorganised according to the wishes of the metropole and its agents. Nevertheless, colonial administration did at least have the virtue of permitting exchange and mobility within frontiers more extensive than those of the future West African states.

As independence approached, the new and overriding concern of the African leaders with nationalism and self-government resulted "in the mass expulsion and partial expropriation of non-indigenous (i.e. foreign) African groups from both Anglophone and Francophone states."<sup>32/</sup> After independence, however, because of a growing awareness of the vulnerability of the small national economies, and with the breakdown of the former colonial and linguistic blocs,

new alignments could be made across these borders, on a regional basis, of which ECOWAS is the first good example, after the first ineffectual moves of pan-African ideologists. What we then have with the ratification of the Protocol /on free movement of labour, residence and capital/ is a *return* to free mobility, this time however, across the politico-linguistic borders.

Even more than the promotion of trade, the mobility of labour and the other factors of production was central to ECOWAS and exemplified what the Community was about. The free movement of persons within the region was both a repudiation of colonial frontiers in so far as they impeded the economic development of the new states, and an affirmation of the spirit of cooperation and mutual assistance. It was not only a symbol of the ECOWAS idea, but was also the main ECOWAS initiative that sought to involve and to benefit the ordinary man and woman in the Community.

It cannot be denied, however, that movement of labour and population across frontiers does pose serious political, social and economic problems, even for more developed countries. Given the under-development of West Africa there was a natural tendency for the unemployed and underemployed to migrate to the more prosperous states and areas. While free mobility within a grouping ensures a more efficient use of resources, it can also provoke the hostility of those forced to accommodate large numbers of nationals from other states. There is the risk of discrimination in employment opportunities, while, in times of economic adversity, there is the temptation to safeguard the interests of one's citizens at home - perhaps at the expense of those living and working abroad.

The question of immigration has, indeed, been a sensitive and recurring political issue in the region, both before and after independence. The expulsion of foreign nationals from Abidjan, the Ivory Coast, in 1958 created considerable ill-will in the states most directly affected, namely Togo, Dahomey (now Benin) and, to some extent, Niger. The expulsion of

aliens from Ghana, in 1969-70, however legal, nevertheless adversely affected nationals of several neighbouring states, including Upper Volta, together with a half million Nigerians who had been living and working in Ghana. These were the most notable cases, but Dahomeans have also been expelled from Niger and later from Upper Volta; Voltaics, as we have seen, have been expelled from Ghana; Ghanaians have been removed from Sierra Leone, while more recently Sierra Leone has taken measures forcibly to repatriate members of the Foulah community who have crossed over in large numbers from Guinea.

In every case the result was a marked deterioration in bilateral relations within the region, considerable individual suffering and hardship, a setback to regional cooperation, and very often, damage to the economies of all the states involved. It is clear that every country in the region is vulnerable to unilateral action seeking to discriminate against foreign nationals, and that more often than not such actions are taken under strong popular pressure and as a result of economic recession. The issue, then, is one that requires the most careful monitoring at all times by responsible officials and by all the governments of the region.

It was our intention in creating ECOWAS that free movement of labour, like trade liberalisation, would proceed gradually being accompanied by other measures to secure promotion of trade, the replacement of competitive by complementary economies, an increase in industrial specialisation and agricultural differentiation, and a programme of industrial location

specially designed to prevent excessive movement across frontiers. Our first concern was to give security to those already living and working abroad in the interests of stabilising production and increasing economic growth. The relaxation of controls could also channel skills and labour to countries where they were in short supply and provide at least temporary relief for those states without adequate employment opportunities.

Articles 2 and 27 of the Treaty called on member states to take positive measures to eliminate "by stages" all obstacles to the free movement of persons, services and capital within the region, while recognising the new status of nationals of all member states as "community citizens". The provisions relating to services and capital were subsequently dealt with in separate protocols. The intention, however, was clear. As Dr. S.K.B.Asante, of Legon University, Ghana, has rightly pointed out:

Undoubtedly, the mutual economic benefit which the member states of ECOWAS could draw from the free movement of labour across their international boundaries would be immense. 34/

While the Nigerian scholar, Dr.O.Chukwurah, has indicated that free movement of persons is a vital way of ensuring the rational use of the Community's human resources - which involves equating labour supply with demand without thereby seriously endangering standards of living and levels of employment or, indeed, national security in the member countries. 35/

The letter of the Treaty could only be implemented, however, by means of a protocol and there were more immediate problems before such a protocol could be drafted and agreed. First there was the definition of a "community citizen", and the problem of ascertaining who would be eligible for that status. Article 27(1) of the Treaty simply states that:

Citizens of Member States shall be regarded as Community citizens and accordingly Member States undertake to abolish all obstacles to their freedom of movement and residence within the Community. 36/

Article 27.2 requires member states, by agreement with one another, to exempt community citizens from holding visitors' visas and residence permits and to allow them to work and undertake commercial and industrial activities within their territories.

Citizenship can, however, be defined by birth, descent or naturalisation, while some states are more stringent than others in their requirements for naturalisation. Some concern was therefore voiced that alien minorities, denied naturalisation in one country, might acquire citizenship elsewhere in the region and return as "community citizens" with full rights of entry and residence, and qualified to undertake (or resume) business activities. The Nigerian delegation had at first wanted to restrict community citizenship to "any citizen of a member country that is of direct African descent." 37/ The matter was reserved for further discussion and was not finally settled until the Summit in May 1981. Meanwhile an additional qualification was introduced in Article 4 of the relevant protocol to the effect that:



notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 above, Member States shall reserve the right to refuse admission into their territory of any Community citizen who comes within the category of inadmissible immigrants under its laws. 38/

There was no problem getting nationals of member states to accept Community citizenship, the real problem rather was to get them to accept a possible influx of nationals of other member states, who might then compete in the labour market for scarce jobs. Such a situation did in fact arise in the Ivory Coast, in 1965, when President Houphouët-Boigny attempted to introduce the principle of "dual citizenship", so as to strengthen the Entente and secure his own country's economy - dependent as it was on immigrant labour from Upper Volta. Under the terms of the proposal non-Ivorian workers would receive Ivory Coast citizenship while retaining their own nationality. The proposal was, however, bitterly contested by Ivorians, especially white collar workers, who saw it as a threat to their employment prospects at home without the compensating advantage of being able to take up similar employment elsewhere in the Entente. In the face of opposition from within the ruling party (PDCI), the President had no alternative but to withdraw his suggestion.

The protocol on free movement of persons was at last drafted, approved and signed on May 29, 1979. The Treaty had envisaged the gradual implementation of the protocol by means of a series of bilateral arrangements on the part of member states, "in the hope that this gradual approach would eventually lead to a multilateral arrangement." After

long deliberation, however, the Authority opted instead for "the multilateral approach *ab initio*" <sup>39/</sup> The protocol nevertheless recognised the wisdom of a gradual approach to such a sensitive question. In the words of the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS : "Anyone who reads the protocol will see that it was very cautiously planned, proposing a stage-by-stage programme." <sup>40/</sup>

The first stage, which took effect immediately, upon ratification, provided for the right of entry without visa for a period not exceeding ninety days. <sup>41/</sup> Upon application, however, a Community citizen could be granted an extension of his time of stay. Valid travel documents and the necessary health certificates would continue to be required. This measure would remain in force for a period of five years, during which trial period the Council of Ministers would consider implementation of the second and third stages, conferring respectively the right of residence and, finally, the right of establishment.

Ratification proved a difficult and protracted exercise. President Shagari of Nigeria raised the question of implementation at the ECOWAS Summit in Lomé, in May 1980.

There seems to have been too slow progress in the ratification of some of our decisions. I would like to refer to the protocol on free movement of persons. Since this protocol was signed a year ago, only six out of 16 have ratified the instrument. Nigeria has, of course, signed the instrument of ratification and has long started to implement the letter and spirit...

It was July 1980 before the required number of states had deposited the articles of ratification, namely Nigeria, Togo, Liberia, Senegal, Guinea, Niger, the Gambia and Ghana. <sup>43/</sup> It is probable that the concern with national security and possible political problems was responsible for the delay, rather than the administrative difficulties cited by the other states. Only one additional state had ratified the protocol by the end of the year.

Moreover, the Executive Secretary also had cause to complain of the "unsatisfactory manner in which the protocol is being implemented". Now ratified by nine states, it

is being implemented by an even fewer number of Member States. It is strongly felt that by now the Protocol should have been ratified and the first phase fully implemented throughout the sub-region. A check on those Member States actually implementing the Protocol, in relation to the measures to be instituted to effect the proper application of the Protocol, revealed that nowhere have the provisions of the Protocol been fully observed." <sup>44/</sup>

Since these provisions included machinery for monitoring the results of implementation, which formed part of the control system originally envisaged by the Community, it was difficult to ensure the successful application of the protocol. And

it should be recalled that it is upon the results of the monitoring and assessment of the operation of the first phase - abolition of visa - that the subsequent phases ... can be introduced. <sup>45/</sup>

Implementation of free movement of persons was perhaps easier in the case of Nigeria, if only because the country had long since entered into a series of bilateral arrangements with all its neighbours, and also with Togo, the Ivory Coast, Guinea and Morocco, exempting their nationals from having to satisfy the customary visa requirements for entry to Nigeria. Suspended during the civil war, these agreements were reactivated on June 4, 1971, in a spirit of "African brotherhood".

It was possible, then, for General Obasanjo to welcome the protocol, agreed in Dakar, in 1979, as "a great step forward". <sup>46/</sup> Almost immediately, however, there were complaints that visas were still required by immigration officials for entry to Nigeria. Although the Nigerian government had ordered immediate implementation of the protocol the story circulated of a Nigerian official at Murtala Muhammed airport who, confronted by a visitor from Sierra Leone without a visa but evidently aware of his Community status, was said to have replied : "ECOWAS for your President and my President. ECOWAS not here." <sup>47/</sup>

As Dr. Ouattara commented : "the protocol itself is not a problem. The question is how it is being implemented."

In fact, we made sure that there were specific directives for member countries to follow so that that protocol, which is the first important measure to affect ECOWAS citizens, should not produce unexpected problems. But time is needed. We anticipated that there would be some uneasiness at the beginning about the free movement of people, but that is not the fault of the protocol. The member countries have to find their feet in this new situation. It is the first real decision they have had to implement. It is the first that affects the ordinary citizen. There will be many more.

<sup>48/</sup>

Implementation of this and other measures was still evidently a serious problem and one considered by the ECOWAS Summit at Cotonou, in May 1982. On the recommendation of the Council of Ministers it was proposed and apparently agreed to set up a committee of five, comprising Nigeria, Senegal, Benin, Togo and Sierra Leone, "to take stock of the Community after seven years."

This has been called for by the Executive Secretary in his report, and will produce a report, particularly on the difficult question of the imperfect implementation of community decisions, for the next meeting of ministers in November. 49/

Nigeria, itself, was in the forefront of those pressing for ECOWAS to start making "real advances". President Shagari had himself insisted:

.. I believe that not enough is being done at national level to demonstrate our commitment to the cause of the Community. Despite our goodwill and declared intentions, several of our protocols and decisions are not being ratified as fast as reasonably expected. Even those ratified are hardly implemented to the spirit and letter. 50/

Opinion in West Africa was not therefore prepared for the Nigeria decision, early in 1983, to expel upwards of one million illegal immigrants, mostly Ghanaians. 51/ They had overstayed the permissible period of ninety days and in most cases had taken up employment without the

necessary papers. Various sections of Nigerian opinion had been agitating for some time for a change in the ECOWAS protocol, effectively restricting the rate of immigration. The downturn in the economy in the late 'seventies and again in the 'eighties created depressed conditions in Nigeria itself, still attuned to the relative prosperity of the years after 1973.

To the fear of unemployment and competition from cheap, immigrant labour, was added the growing problem of law and order, particularly in the large cities and towns, which was seen by many as yet another consequence of population movement into the country. More serious was the threat to national security underlined by the Kano disturbances at the end of 1980 and the riots in Maiduguri in October 1982.

To some extent the blame was misplaced. The influx of labour into Nigeria was primarily a response to the oil boom and would doubtless have taken place - albeit on a smaller scale - irrespective of the ECOWAS decision. The cheap labour complained of by unions such as the Gongola branch of the National Union of Construction and Civil Engineering Workers (NUCCEW) came, by the Union's own admission, from Chad and the Cameroon as well as from Niger.<sup>52/</sup> Only the last was a member of ECOWAS. The foreigners identified as being active in the Kano and Maiduguri troubles were likewise mostly from Cameroon and Chad, neither of them members of ECOWAS. The real problem is the artificial and therefore 'porous' nature of West African frontiers - which can only be resolved by the joint action of all interested governments.

Moreover, large numbers of Nigerian nationals were also resident and working in other West African states where economic conditions were in no way better than in Nigeria. It was unfortunate, too that the Ghanaian regime, in defiance of the ECOWAS Treaty, had closed its frontiers with its neighbours in September 1982, preventing Ghanaians expelled from Nigeria from returning quickly and with the minimum of inconvenience to their own country. Although the border post with Togo was eventually opened, Ghana has yet to re-open all her frontiers.

There had been other incidents in West Africa, prior to the Nigerian decision, and after the conclusion of the ECOWAS Treaty. The Benin-Togo frontier had been closed by the government in Cotonou late in 1975 and was not re-opened until March 1977, despite protestations by the Togolese and Ghanaian governments and the intervention of Nigeria.<sup>53/</sup> In December 1982 Sierra Leone had expelled members of the Foulah community, originally from Guinea, while a subsequent incident between the Sierra Leone government and the new regime in Liberia had led to the closure of the frontier and the deployment of some 2,000 Liberian troops along the border. And both states were members not only of ECOWAS but also of the Mano River Union. Nevertheless the Mano River Union called for an emergency session of ECOWAS to discuss the problems arising from the Nigeria action in 1983.<sup>54/</sup>

However justified in legal terms it was perhaps unfortunate that the Nigerian government was compelled, in the end, to act unilaterally to try to resolve a problem that is common to most of the West African

states and certainly to the more prosperous of them. Greater cooperation on the part of all the governments concerned would certainly have reduced the problem to more manageable proportions. Meanwhile, it should be the function of ECOWAS to ensure that such problems do not arise in future.

The member states - or a majority of them - would seem to have failed in their duty to create the administrative machinery required to monitor the flow of labour in defence of ECOWAS. It has also to be said, however, that it was only in 1972, sixteen years after the creation of the EEC, that the West European states themselves recognised the need for a regional policy, designed to eliminate excessive labour movement within the Community. They sought to achieve this by financing additional jobs in the more depressed regions. Economic recession is always likely to exacerbate national tensions, but it is at such times that cooperation among governments is most needed.

#### Non-Aggression Pact

The issue of regional security has often been linked with that of regional cooperation. The very presence of a common external threat may inspire political leaders to work towards a common external tariff - as in post-war Western Europe. However, a political and economic community seldom entails the simultaneous creation of a defence community. The success of the EEC after 1956 was in no way impeded by the failure of the European Defence Community (EDC) in 1954-5. In any case, the external threat may be economic rather than military - or both as in the case of the Andean Pact, created in the shadow of Brazil and Argentina.



Military motivations were perhaps more in evidence in the Association of South East Asian States (ASEAN), whose role and importance increased with the American withdrawal from Vietnam. The Central American Common Market, on the other hand, foundered after the so-called 'football' war, involving two of its principal member states.

In most of black Africa, before the 'seventies, defence agreements with the former colonial powers were more frequent in the case of France and her former African territories. The Anglo-Nigerian Defence Treaty had lapsed after 1961, while the last British intervention in East Africa was in 1964. By the 'seventies, even the Franco-African defence commitments had either lapsed or were the subject of revision as African states sought to assert their sovereignty in this vital area. In West Africa, the French retained small garrisons in Senegal and the Ivory Coast, and continued to offer military aid and assistance to other states in the region, including Niger, Togo and Benin and, most notably, Mauritania, following the outbreak of fighting in the former Spanish Sahara.

But French military policy under Giscard d'Estaing was even more selective than under his Gaullist predecessors, and the main thrust was eastwards, towards Central Africa and Zaire, threatened first from the South, with the two 'invasions' of Shaba province in 1977 and 1978, and then from the North, following the collapse of the French-backed administration in Chad. The complete withdrawal of French forces from Mauritania threatened to expose West Africa to the escalating conflict in the former Spanish enclave, while the temporary withdrawal of French

forces from Chad, in the late 'seventies, occasioned even greater alarm among the adjacent Francophone and non-Francophone states.

In any case France had always retained considerable discretion in the matter of implementing the defence agreements, which explains her preference for bi-lateral rather than multi-lateral pacts. It was no surprise, therefore, that the defence pact organised by members of the Union Africain et Malgache (UAMD) was ineffective, certainly where issues of internal security were involved. At the time of the first military intervention in black Africa, which coincided with the assassination of President Olympio of Togo, in January 1963, no African leader, however alarmed, thought to appeal to that particular grouping. When OCAM was constituted later in the 'sixties, there was again discussion about a common defence pact but by then differences among member states were so pronounced and their ideologies sometimes so distinct that mutual defence, like the other political aspects of OCAM, was seldom if ever invoked.

In West Africa, at a sub-regional level, members of the Entente were all bound by a mutual defence agreement, as well as having bilateral agreements with France. These were designed, originally, to contain any possible threat from Nkrumah's Ghana and were frequently referred to following his overthrow, in February 1966, when it seemed that Guinea might attempt forcibly to restore him to power. However, the real security of the Entente members derived from their bilateral treaties with France - soon confirmed by Jacques Foccart's visit to the sub-region at the height of the 1966 'crisis'.

In an attempt to reduce the dependence of the African states on outside powers, and to lessen the scope for unwanted external intervention, the OAU Charter echoed that of the United Nations in calling on its signatories "to refrain, in their international relations, from the threat of use of force against the territorial integrity or independence of any State." More specifically, the OAU document requires member states to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state "and its inalienable right to an independent existence." But these commitments have not always been scrupulously observed.

Inter-state and border problems have been widespread in Africa and are usually politically motivated and, for the most part, restricted to an exchange of verbal recriminations; on occasion, however, they have resulted in the deployment of use of force, usually when the political tensions are heightened either by economic disparities or ideological disputes. While the OAU does provide for common defence arrangements to ensure members against such aggression, the difficulty of obtaining the agreement of so many states with such varied interests has in practice precluded the creation of any effective machinery. A more practical means of providing collective security would seem to be the provisions of the OAU Charter for regional defence agreements - reducing African dependence on outside powers and at the same time increasing the chances of effective cooperation in many other areas of policy.

There was renewed interest in the question of collective security in Africa in the aftermath of Angolan independence in November 1975, when civil war and external involvement seemed for a time to revive the

ideological divisions of the early 'sixties, with the accompanying threat to peace, security and cooperation. Events in southern, central and north-eastern Africa, later in the 'seventies, showed a considerable and not altogether welcome revival of interest by the super-powers and others in the affairs of our continent. Meanwhile, the conflict between Uganda and Tanzania, was a reminder of continuing border tensions and the damage they could inflict - although the East African Community was by then defunct. The renewed war between Somalis and Ethiopia, in 1977-78, aroused the fear of other African leaders - particularly when it seemed, for a time, that Africa's frontiers might be redrawn by the use of force rather than by negotiation. Perhaps of more immediate relevance to West Africa was the growing conflict on the northern perimeters of ECOWAS, involving Mauritania in the dispute over the former Spanish Sahara, and involving Nigeria and Niger as the conflict in Chad escalated to new and alarming proportions.

Since the drafting of the ECOWAS Treaty and its final approval, in 1975, the prospects for continuing peace within the region seemed increasingly threatened. There had been problems in the 'sixties which had contributed, among other things, to the failure of a number of earlier attempts at regional integration, notably the West African Regional Group in 1967-8, overtaken as it was by growing tensions among the Francophone states, as well as by the conflict in Nigeria itself. However, when the ECOWAS Treaty was under consideration, in the 'seventies, the political situation in the region improved to such an extent that we had no cause to consider the inclusion of a non-aggression clause, either in the Treaty itself, or in one of the accompanying Protocols. The short border conflict between Mali and Upper Volta in December 1974 was too recent and scarcely seemed to require a major revision of the Treaty, particularly as other ECOWAS members, such as Togo and Guinea, were able to mediate with considerable success.

The conflicts in Shaba province of Zaire, in 1977 and again in 1978, following the conclusion of the civil war in Angola, and involving military intervention by France, Belgium and, indirectly, America, and the introduction of a 'Pan-African Defence Force' into the province, raised the spectre of similar eruptions elsewhere in Africa and led to demands, particularly from President Senghor of Senegal, for a *Force Africaine Commune*, based perhaps in the Ivory Coast and having the benefit of French logistical support. <sup>55/</sup>

The issue dominated the Fourth and Fifth Franco-African Summits in Dakar, in April 1977, and again in Paris in May 1978. The build-up of Cuban troops and Soviet arms, and growing East-West confrontation in Africa and neighbouring regions, failed to produce agreement on Senghor's proposal - probably to the relief of the French President - but did result in a communique, in 1977, condemning "foreign intervention in the affairs of the continent, from whichever direction it should come" and stressing the over-riding concern of all African states, irrespective of their political outlook, with peace and development. <sup>56/</sup> Houphouët-Boigny had joined. Senghor in 1977 in calling for "an end to all aggression, direct and indirect, and of all attempts to create subversion in the continent", while Giscard d'Estaing condemned aggression promising French assistance for any country that should find itself so threatened. <sup>57/</sup>

However, a number of states had already expressed reservations about the idea of a joint French-African force. Guinea Bissau, for example, had no wish to renew military ties with any European power having just removed the Portuguese. The President of Mali suggested that a non-aggression pact, signed by the six member states of the Francophone West

African Community (CEAO), would be preferable to a Franco-African 'Holy Alliance'. <sup>58/</sup> The matter was then referred to the CEAO Summit later that year. The CEAO Summit in May-June voted for a non-aggression pact - as President Traore of Mali replaced his former opponent, President Lamizana as Chairman of the Francophone Community. In his closing address, however, President Senghor returned once more to the earlier theme of collective security.

In today's bleeding Africa, where a war which dares not speak its name continues in the north-west and a fire is starting in the east, the main need of all states, the imperative pre-condition for their development, is security. <sup>59/</sup>

Meanwhile, the issue was no longer confined to French-speaking states as was shown by the presence of increasing numbers of Portuguese and English-speaking states at the Franco-African Summits. In May 1977, before the CEAO itself adopted the principle of a non-aggression pact, Houphouët-Boigny, in the course of a six-day visit to neighbouring Liberia, had concluded an agreement between the two states committing them to the conclusion of a non-aggression pact "in line with their policy never to allow their respective territories to be used as a military training base against any other state." <sup>60/</sup> Both Presidents voiced their strong opposition to the use of terror, violence and force to settle inter-state disputes; they also re-affirmed their belief in ECOWAS, expressing satisfaction at its steady progress. In 1979 Liberia and Guinea agreed to draw up a non-aggression and defence pact between their two countries after a two-day visit by President Sékou Touré. <sup>61/</sup>

With the spectacular reconciliation between President Mobutu of Zaire and President Neto of Angola, in August 1978, and with Shaba province once more calm, the earlier enthusiasm for collective security seems to have waned for a time, even among the more 'moderate' Francophone states. President Bongo, of Gabon, for example, told the Franco-African Summit in Kigali, Ruanda, in May 1979, that collective security was a matter for the OAU rather than for a conference of predominantly French speaking states. Whereas Senghor continued to press the case for collective security on the part of the African states, if only to guarantee their economic development, most delegates were reported to favour President Bongo's proposal for regional defence pacts.<sup>62/</sup> In his view and that of the delegates, any multilateral force would have to be organised under the aegis of the OAU and which would present considerable problems.

Meanwhile the question of a non-aggression pact had been discussed in the context of ECOWAS as early as the Lomé Summit in November 1976. President Eyadema of Togo strongly favoured such an initiative, as did the Nigerian Government, and both countries had worked together preparing a draft protocol for submission to the Summit. General Eyadema devoted much of his opening address in Lomé to the subject, while General Obasanjo's concluding remarks returned to the same theme.

Your Excellencies, please permit me at this point in time to reiterate the proposal so generously supported by our brother, President Eyadema, in his opening remarks, about the imperative need to refrain from the use of force in settling our problems, which I personally consider very important to our Community. It seems to me, in this regard, that we have too often permitted avoidable political differences to divert our attention from the desired goal of economic

development and cooperation in our sub-region. I believe, therefore, that we should spare no efforts under the auspices of the Community, to stabilise peace and harmony in our sub-region, and to re-affirm our adherence to the Charters of the United Nations Organisation and the Organisation of African Unity on peaceful co-existence among the nations of the world.

I refer, of course, to the proposal to insert a non-aggression clause in the Treaty of ECOWAS. It is, in our view, a proposal that is worthy of early consideration by the High Authority of Heads of State and Government of the ECOWAS, in the interest of lasting peace and security in our sub-region as a solid basis for the economic and social integration of our peoples and our lands.

It would be tantamount to self-deceit to hope for economic and social cooperation and integration, in an atmosphere of disharmony and hostilities in the sub-region.

63/

Referring to the basic aims of the Community as stated in Article 2 of the Treaty, and recognising the necessity for "peaceful and friendly relations among the Member States ... as a means of promoting cooperation and development in all fields of economic activity within the Community", the proposed Protocol comprised only a single paragraph:

All Member States of the Community shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of a Member State and to this end shall settle all their international disputes by peaceful means.

64/



A resolution favourable to the proposal was carried on November 5, although the final terms of the protocol could not be agreed at this Summit because of pressure of other business. By June 1977 the six member states of the CEAO had concluded their own non-aggression pact, and Eyadema again raised the matter with the Nigerian Government, querying the delay in amending the ECOWAS Treaty in the same direction. Both governments agreed that, notwithstanding the independent action of the CEAO states, the matter should be vigorously pursued within ECOWAS to enable another draft to be tabled before the next meeting of the Council of Ministers in July 1977. <sup>65/</sup>

In the event the draft was submitted to the Council of Ministers meeting prior to the Lagos Summit, in April 1978. Benin (Dahomey) produced a more comprehensive text which was then combined with the main draft to produce the definitive version of the protocol finally approved by the Authority on April 22. <sup>66/</sup> Earlier reservations expressed by Niger and Sierra Leone, about the competence of the Council to discuss such a matter were withdrawn after appeals from other leaders present. There was apparently a general consensus that any arrangement that contributed to peace and stability was not only desirable but was also a pre-requisite for the rapid economic development of the region. <sup>67/</sup>

The new, expanded version of the protocol set out in much greater detail the obligations of member states towards one another. Not only should they refrain, as before, from "the threat or use of aggression", or employing other means inconsistent with the UN and OAU Charters "against the territorial integrity or political independence of other Member States", but, in addition:

2. Each Member State shall refrain from committing, encouraging or condoning acts of subversion, hostility or aggression against the territorial integrity or political independence of the other Member States.
3. Each Member State shall undertake to prevent Foreigners resident on its territory from committing the acts referred to in Article 2 above against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other Member States.
4. Each Member State shall undertake to prevent non-resident Foreigners from using its territory as a base for committing the acts referred to in Article 2 above.

68/

Member States were pledged "to resort to all peaceful means in the settlement of disputes arising among themselves", while "any dispute which cannot be settled peacefully among Member States shall be referred to a Committee of the Authority." The protocol provided further that, in the event that the committee, to be set up by the Authority, failed to achieve a settlement, "the dispute shall finally go to the Authority." <sup>69/</sup> The protocol was signed and subsequently ratified, becoming an integral part of the ECOWAS Treaty.

#### Mutual Aid and Assistance for Defence

During 1978 there was considerable discussion within ECOWAS of ways by which the intentions of the protocol might be more effectively realised in practice. Troops from Senegal and Togo and medical personnel from the Ivory Coast were, meanwhile, involved in the 'Pan-African Defence Force' operating within Shaba province of Zaire, although the force was due to be withdrawn in September 1978. It was not surprising, therefore, that the ECOWAS conference in Dakar, Senegal, in May 1979 should have before it separate proposals for an ECOWAS Defence Pact submitted by Senegal and Togo, for the information of the Council of Ministers and the consideration of the Authority. <sup>70/</sup>

Recalling the Non-Aggression Pact signed by member states in April 1978, the Authority declared itself "convinced that peace, security and territorial integrity are the basic conditions for political stability, economic and social progress of ECOWAS Member States" - and convinced, too, "of the necessity to supplement the said Non-Aggression Pact with a Mutual Defence Agreement." <sup>71/</sup> Having taken note of the different draft proposals submitted by Senegal and Togo, the Authority instructed the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and the Executive Secretary to convene a meeting of Chiefs of Staff of the various national armies, together with the ministers responsible for Defence, Foreign Affairs, Finance and Economic Planning/Development, to consider these drafts and submit their own recommendations for a Defence Pact to the next ECOWAS Summit. <sup>72/</sup>

The delay in approving a Defence Agreement seemed to reflect concern about the nature, scope and effectiveness of the proposed measures and an awareness of the many practical problems involved in constituting a combined Defence Force. In no circumstances could the force be deployed against an internal opposition without clear evidence of external military involvement by another state or states.

But domestic unrest was easily the most frequent cause of political instability within the region, and was a major pre-occupation in some states. Other countries, affected by border conflicts in the past, were reluctant, perhaps, to entrust their defence to a regional force including former critics and/or opponents. Others again, like

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Mauritania, who felt threatened by forces operating on or beyond the perimeters of the region, looked for some assurance that their partners in the Community would identify with their cause.

Within the region there were states, too, who feared that the proposed joint force might be deployed in support of French or Western, rather than West African interests. Outside the region the French, themselves, had not previously shown themselves sympathetic to the idea of multilateral defence agreements, even when proposed by such loyal allies as Senegal. Finally, the logistical problems and the difficulties in recruiting, training, arming, housing, clothing and financing a permanent standing force made it more likely that individual countries would be asked to designate special units for possible Community service. Even then a considerable amount of planning was involved and provision had to be made for the appointment of a Force Commander. How much discretion he enjoyed in the deployment of troops and in the planning of exercises, and his relationship both to the Authority and to the government requesting intervention, was another issue for ECOWAS to resolve.

The Nigerian view about such a force was that it should be primarily for defence against external aggression and that it was premature at this stage to think in terms of a single, integrated regional army. Coordination would be secured through a Community headquarters which could then call on various states to provide an agreed number of troops. There might also be a peace-keeping element within the region with provision for mediation and arbitration before there was any recourse to military intervention. The principal need was to avoid recourse to non-ECOWAS forces in cases of external threat to member states.

The proposed Defence Pact was again considered at the Lome Summit of ECOWAS, in May 1980, with leaders being asked to choose between the different proposals from Senegal and Togo. President Eyadema opened the Summit with a strong recommendation that it should approve a common defence organisation.

We must at all costs maintain peace and stability ... This is why the pact of non-aggression ... must acquire greater significance. Collective acceptance of a common defence pact will free us from the permanent obsession of war and aggression. It is when each member state of ECOWAS knows that it need not fear its neighbour, which is ready to fly to its aid in the event of any aggression, that we can serenely occupy ourselves with the multiple tasks imposed by our development.

He ended his speech with an appeal to

all areas of the continent where peace remains precarious ... to hear the voice of consultation and dialogue, for no problem can be solved by force or the use of arms. That is why, in accordance with their vocation of peace, cooperation and progress, the Togolese people will participate in any initiative meant to safeguard peace in our region because we in Togo are convinced that with peace and unity among our people we can obtain the necessary force for this new war for our economic and social development. 73/

Nigeria and Togo again strongly favoured such a pact since ECOWAS must be "meticulously protected" from both internal and external aggression. At the earlier Council of Ministers, however, the Mali delegate had already maintained that the formation of a joint force would be a step towards the "colonial reconquest" of Africa "and would encourage splitting the continent into blocks dominated by outside powers."<sup>74/</sup> There were reported to be strong objections, too, from the former Portuguese

territories, Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau, and from Benin. No final agreement could therefore be reached, although a large majority does seem to have accepted the immediate need for a common defence organisation to safeguard the institutions of the Community. An eight-nation ministerial committee was therefore set up comprising Nigeria, Togo, Senegal, the Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Cape Verde and Niger, to revive the question of the defence treaty and report back to the next Summit - which would also consider the question of command and the financing of the force.<sup>75/</sup> The concluding remarks of the outgoing Chairman of the Authority, President Senghor, pointed the way to a possible resolution of the issue.

As we are all aware, there is no development without security. It might be advisable and even normal to leave out those countries which do not want to join and let those wishing to do so negotiate a defence pact. 76/

It was the Freetown Summit, in May 1981, which finally approved the Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defence, In the event only Mali, Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau failed to initial the protocol which was subsequently ratified.<sup>77/</sup> By way of preamble the protocol notes that member states are "conscious of the serious continuous threats of aggression on the African continent in general and their own countries in particular"; and conscious, too, "of the serious risks that the presence of foreign military bases on the African continent may constitute as support forces to external aggression." They were also aware of "the fact that external defence of their states depends entirely on each sovereign state, and that such a defence will be more effective with the coordination and pooling together of the means of mutual assistance provided by respective Member States within the framework of this Protocol."

Chapter II provided that "mutual aid and assistance for defence" would be available in the case of "any armed threat or aggression directed against any Member State" which shall be deemed to "constitute a threat or aggression against the entire Community."

In the case of armed conflict between member states, mutual aid and assistance for defence would only be available "if the settlement procedure by peaceful means as indicated in Article 5 of the Non-Aggression Protocol ... proves ineffective." Where there was internal armed conflict within any Member State engineered and supported actively from outside" and "likely to endanger the security and peace in the entire Community", then the Authority itself shall appreciate and decide on this situation in full collaboration with the Authority of the Member State or States concerned." In such difficult cases considerable discretion therefore rested with the Authority of the Community.

The responsibility for implementing the mutual defence proposals rested with the Authority which "shall decide on the expediency of military action and entrust its execution to the Force Commander of the Allied Forces of the Community (AAFC)." The Authority's decisions on these matters "shall be immediately enforceable on Member States."

The better to meet its responsibilities in case of emergency the Authority was authorised to "hold extraordinary sessions on defence matters where circumstances so require."

Otherwise the Authority is to be assisted by a Defence Council, comprising Ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs of the member states.

In case of crisis the Council would be chaired by the current Chairman of the Authority while there was provision for its membership to be varied "according to the circumstances". Technical matters would be entrusted to yet another body, the Defence Commission, to be established by the Authority and to comprise a Chief of Staff from each member state.

In an emergency, the Defence Council would "examine the situation", the strategy to be adopted and the means of intervention to be used"; while, assisted by the Defence Commission, it would

supervise with the authority of the State or States Concerned, all measures to be taken by the Force Commander and ensure that all necessary means for the intervention are made available to him. The actions of the Force Commander shall be subject to competent political authority of the Member State or States concerned.

The Executive Secretariat would be enlarged to provide for a Deputy Executive Secretary (Military), to be appointed by the Defence Council from among senior serving military officers for a period of four years renewable only once. Under the authority of the Executive Secretary he would be entrusted with the administration of the Authority's decisions, would prepare and manage the military budget of the Secretariat, would report to the Secretariat "on all matters relating to personnel and equipment within his jurisdiction", and "shall update plans for the movement of troops and logistics and initiate joint exercises as provided for in paragraph 3 of Article 13 below."



It was clear from Chapter V that the Allied Armed Forces of the Community would consist of "earmarked units from the existing National Armed Forces", placed at the Community's disposal by member states "in case of any armed intervention". Its effectiveness would be ensured by a provision that "the Member States may organise, from time to time, as may be approved by the Authority, joint military exercises among two or more earmarked Units of the AAFC."

The Force Commander would himself be appointed by the Authority on the proposal of the Defence Council and would receive his powers from the Authority. He and the Chief of Defence Staff of the assisted country would together comprise the Joint Chief of Defence Staff of the Allied Armed Forces and would "be responsible for the implementation of armed intervention and assistance as decided by the Authority." Given the innumerable and often serious problems previously encountered by joint military action of this kind, Chapter V on the "modalities of Intervention and Assistance" was perhaps unduly optimistic about the prospects for overall coordination, integration of the forces, and unity of command. But the concluding sentence in Article 14, relating to the Armed Forces Commander, was more in the nature of an aspiration : "He shall have at his disposal all necessary means of defence."

The remainder of Chapter V was concerned with the details by which the Head of State of a country confronting an external armed threat might communicate his request for assistance to the Authority. Article 17 specified mediation by the Authority in case of conflict between two member states. "If need be, the Authority shall decide only

to interpose the AAFC between the troops engaged in the conflict."

Other than recourse to mediation there was no mention of any return by troops to their original pre-conflict positions. Article 18 was rather more explicit where the conflict was within the frontiers of a member state. Mutual Defence Aid and Assistance would be provided only "in the case where an internal conflict in a Member State of the Community is actively maintained and sustained from outside..." (18.1). "Community forces shall not intervene if the conflict remains purely internal." (18.2).

Under Chapter III "special provisions" of the protocol enabled member states to subscribe to other conventions or agreements on defence "provided such Conventions and Agreements are not in conflict with the spirit of this Defence Assistance." Nevertheless member states were instructed to "undertake to end the presence of foreign military bases within their national territories as soon as the Community is in the position to meet their requirements in matters relating to defence."

The adoption of the Mutual Defence Protocol on May 29, 1981, gave rise to various comments. One journal described its impact as mainly "psychological", helping to create the right climate in which cooperation can flourish. <sup>78/</sup> Lagos Radio was more positive in its appraisal.

The significance of a defence protocol cannot be overemphasised, particularly at a time when almost every African country is becoming more and more vulnerable to external aggression. It is a fact that there cannot be any meaningful development without peace and adequate security. In fact, both are necessary conditions for the welfare and prosperity of the citizens of any state, country or sub-region. And to the extent that this is the case for member countries of ECOWAS union such a defence pact will be indispensable.

Besides, the establishment of the ECOWAS joint defence force can be seen as a point of departure for the setting-up of a similar force on a continental level. It is recalled that in the early 1960s President Kwame Nkrumah's initiative in the Casablanca group of African states for the setting-up of an African High Command was somewhat unpopular. Since then, many radical African countries have not relented in their efforts for a continental high command similar to those of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

But in spite of the fact that the Charter of the OAU refers in its preamble to the need to establish and maintain conditions of peace and security on the continent, members only agreed in dubious terms to coordinate and harmonise their general policies for defence and security. In fact, the defence commission set up has been ineffective because it has neither the power nor the equipment with which to work.

There is no doubt that several factors have militated against the formation of an African High Command. One of these is undisputably the reluctance of most African countries to give up a part of their sovereignty for a continental cause. Ironically, there are compelling reasons why African states ought to give their support to the idea of a united defence system for the continent. South Africa, for one, poses a constant threat to the security of the states in southern Africa. It recently fulfilled its promise to attack any neighbouring state that provides sanctuary to black freedom fighters. For instance, the Headquarters of the African National Congress of South Africa was attacked in Maputo, Mozambique. The racists have vowed to carry out similar raids anywhere else when the occasion demands. Also there is the question of foreign military intervention in African affairs.

Today, foreign troops are stationed in areas that should be manned by an African defence force. What has happened so far is that the difficulties in the way of the formation of such a defence force have been played down. What should be realised, however, is that the threat to the independence and sovereignty of each African nation is beyond the means of a single state to contain. The ECOWAS protocol on a mutual defence force must therefore be seen as a first step towards an attempt for a collective defence system for the West African sub-region. Whether or not the move will appeal to the rest of Africa is a question of time.

79/

My own view is that although the Defence Protocol might be necessary, it represents a diversion of activity away from the main purpose

of the Community, which is economic. It was our view that the economic development of the region as a whole and the experience of close and continuing cooperation, both economic and political, would together help guarantee the security of West Africa and the states that comprise it - and would do so more successfully and at less cost than the creation of a top-heavy and administratively complex regional task force. Military coordination for external defence and peace-keeping is, of course, a necessary and perfectly valid exercise. But it is a burden that is, in any case, likely to be born by a relatively small number of states and which is perhaps more appropriately dealt with, at this stage, in the context of the OAU, rather than our own West African community. <sup>80/</sup>

By way of contrast the Non-Aggression Pact is very much in the main stream of African policy with the emphasis on political rather than military sanctions, at least in the first instance. But it largely re-states the existing provisions of the UN and OAU Charters. If we did not include provision for mutual defence in the original ECOWAS Treaty it was because there was, at the time, no serious threat to the security of the region and because the risk of external intervention could best be minimised by resolving our own internal differences peacefully and presenting a united front to the outside world. If we cannot first achieve that the prospects for joint military action would not seem very promising. <sup>81/</sup>

## REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

1. Treaty of the ECOWAS, Ch.XI, Articles 50-52; Protocols relating to the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development of the ECOWAS, Articles 1-44; Protocols Relating to the Contributions by Member States to the Budget of the ECOWAS. Articles I-VI.
2. Minutes of Discussions held between the Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria and His Excellency, President Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, 26 May 1975.
3. Ibid.
4. Protocol Relating to the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development of the ECOWAS, Articles 5(1).
5. West Africa, 15 November 1976.
6. Annual Report of the Executive Secretary, ECOWAS, 1980-1. Part V, p.42.
7. West Africa, 7 June 1982.
8. West Africa, 7 June 1982. Although one unconfirmed report from the Conakry Summit of May 1983, referred to differences between the Executive Secretary and the Deputy Managing Director of the Fund, who was himself from Benin (Dahomey) West Africa, 13 June 1983.
9. Although it was reported at the Freetown Summit in 1981, that:  
 "One common feature which ran through all the meetings of the ECOWAS Sub-Commission and the Council of Ministers held in Freetown last month was the talk of member states not living up to their financial and other obligations. Chairman after Chairman of the various sub-commissions complained that the progress of their operation was being stifled by the negligence of Member States in paying their annual contributions.

During the meeting of the Fund, it was reported that most of the 16 member states of the Community, only six had completely paid up their contributions to the Fund's capital and budget. Outstanding contributions to the Fund's capital from ten member states amounted to \$11,844,317.77. It was also reported that most of the member states had not paid their quota to the Special Fund set up to finance the proposed telecommunications network, to which member states are to contribute a total of \$8.5m. in various amounts. It had been agreed that to facilitate payments into the Special Fund, a Special Account will be opened in member states so that 40 per cent. of their contributions could be paid in local currency and the remaining 60 per cent. to the Fund at its headquarters in Lome, Togo. This arrangement, according to the report of the Fund, had been treated with negligence.

The Telecommunications Committee, at its meeting in Freetown, also in November, decided that the last date of payment to this Special Fund would be March, 1982. Sierra Leone's Minister of Finance, Development

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont.

and Economic Planning, Dr. Sama Banya, who is current Chairman of ECOWAS Council of Ministers, reported at the Council Meeting that progress is being seriously hampered by non-payment of obligations.

"It is disheartening to note", the Minister said, "that contributions to the effective running of the Community are not being made as they should, thus depriving the organs of the Community of Funds for the effective implementation of our decisions."

West Africa, 14 December 1981.

The Communications project "is probably the only one which the Community has progressed with so far." Feasibility studies had been concluded in the previous year for a project that involves substituting direct and rapid communication between member-states without having to go through Paris or London, as is often the case now." Dr. Ouattara had promised that "by May (1980) telecommunications would definitely be better in West Africa. There was recommendations for the linking up of several lines that are "necessary for the completion of PANAFTEL". West Africa, 25 February 1980.

10. Minutes of Discussions with the Senegalese Minister of Finance, Lagos, 16 December 1978.
11. See the useful and informative discussion of the question by Dr. S.K.B.Asante, 'Seven Years of ECOWAS : Trade Problems and Prospects', West Africa, 24 May 1982.
12. Treaty of the ECOWAS. Chapter III. Also ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Programme, ECOWAS Policies and Programme Series, No.2, Lagos 1981, pp.9-11.
13. Member states were grouped into two for the purpose of tariff elimination : C1 as the first category which are industrially more advanced countries - Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Ghana and Senegal; C2 as the second category which are industrially less advanced countries - Benin, Cape Verde, Granada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Sierra Leone, Togo and Upper Volta. Ibid. p.19.
14. "Unless trade promotion measures are taken simultaneously to improve market intelligence and market situations, the mere abolition of licences will not be sufficient to increase mutual trade in any marked way." Ibid., p.21.
15. The provisions of the relevant Protocol are cited in Development of the Authority - the First Five Years, 1977-1981, ECOWAS, Lagos, 1981, pp.21-22. Dr. Ouattara told a press conference in Accra that:  
"ECOWAS will guard against the experience of the East African Community which was in difficulty, mainly due to revenue allocation." He said compensation will be paid to those countries which lose revenue through customs and tariff relaxations to bring ECOWAS into fruition. The ECOWAS Fund for Compensation, Cooperation and Development could be judiciously administered to give priority to the least developed areas of the Community to help achieve some balance on constraints of revenue sharing among member states. There could not, however, be arithmetical balance in revenue sharing and whatever formula was agreed would need to be continuously reviewed."  
West Africa, 27 June 1977.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont.

16. In May 1980, the Authority decided that industrial enterprises producing Community originating goods should have the following proportion of their equity capital in the hands of nationals of member states : 20 per cent as from 28 May 1981; 35 per cent as from May 1983, and 51 per cent as from 28 May 1989. Under the compensation provisions "the contribution of Member States to the Compensation Budget would be in relation to its share of intra-Community export trade. The Authority also decided to deduct 20 per cent of the compensation due to the more industrialised Member States over a period of 5 years, thereafter the 20 per cent will be allocated to all Member States for another period of 5 years."  
Ibid.,p.16.
17. Annual Report of the Executive Secretary 1980-1981, ECOWAS, May 1981, p.15 (questionnaire), p.18 (tariff schedules).
18. Ibid.,p.19.
19. Annual Report of the Executive Secretary, 1981-1982, ECOWAS, May 1982.
20. West Africa, 7 June 1982.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Annual Report of the Executive Secretary 1981-1982, ECOWAS, May 1982.
25. Ibid.
26. West Africa, 7 June 1982.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. "Not for the first time had the Ivorian President come to the aid of ECOWAS." Ibid. The Community as a whole would also finance the construction of the Headquarters of the Fund in Lomé.
30. Ibid.
31. West Africa, 8 September 1980.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.

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34. West Africa, 3 July 1978.
35. Ibid.
36. Treaty of the ECOWAS, Article 27 (1)
37. Memorandum from the Federal Commissioner for Economic Development to the Federal Executive Council, April 1979. The multilateral protocol was prepared by the ECOWAS Secretariat assisted by a Committee of Experts from Benin, Cape Verde, Senegal and Nigeria. The Committee based its recommendation on the immigration laws of member states and on the experience of the European Economic Community. Ibid.
38. Protocol Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment, Part III, Article 4. ECOWAS Policies and Programmes Series No.1, Lagos 1981, p.15.
39. Report of ECOWAS meetings held in Lagos, 10-22, April 1978, Ministry of External Affairs, 3 May 1978.
40. West Africa, 1 June 1981.
41. Protocol Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment, Part III, Article 3(2).
42. West Africa, 9 June 1980.
43. S.K.B.Asante, 'ECOWAS and the Expulsions', West Africa, 18 April 1983. "A more cautious note was sounded by President Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone. Speaking about the proposal to increase freedom of movement within the region, he urged the Heads of State to delay a decision, in order to allow sufficient time to create an 'ECOWAS Consciousness' within the various countries. A hasty decision might have disastrous consequences, he said. It would be pointless for ECOWAS to take a decision which member states would find it difficult to implement."  
West Africa, 1 May 1978 (ed.)
44. Annual Report of the Executive Secretary, 1980-1981, May 1981, p.21.
45. Ibid.
46. Address by His Excellency, General O. Obasanjo, Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria, at the Opening Session of the Meeting of the Authority held in Dakar, Senegal, 28 May 1979. There was already debate about the Protocol within Nigeria. When asked if the Protocol had adequate provisions to protect a country like Nigeria which will receive a large proportion of the immigrants, Dr. Ouattara had said:



REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES cont.

"I want to make it clear that Nigeria is not the country in the region most likely to be affected. In Nigeria, non-Nigerian Africans make only about 2% of the labour force compared to 40-50% in the Ivory Coast, for example." He added, "It is established that immigration in the region is along cultural lines and not necessarily on the bases of prosperity."  
West Africa, 19 March 1979.

A year later an informed observer commented:  
 "The disquiet that has already been expressed at the protocol testifies to the manifest delicacy of the programme. Dr. Ouattara has been at pains to reassure Nigerians that they should not worry about an influx of other Africans into Nigeria. He maintains that there are many more Nigerians living in other West African countries. The issue received adverse publicity recently when some Nigerians were refused entry into the Ivory Coast and this resulted in the despatch of a senior Ivorian delegation to Lagos to reassure the Nigerian Government."  
West Africa, 4 August 1980.

47. West Africa, 1 June 1981 (ed.)
48. West Africa, 1 June 1981
49. West Africa, 7 June 1982.
50. Ibid.
51. 'Strangers and ECOWAS', West Africa, 31 January 1983 (ed.); 'Nigeria and her Neighbours', West Africa, 7 February 1983.(ed.)
52. R.I.Onwuka, 'The ECOWAS Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons: A Threat to Nigerian Security?', African Affairs, 81 (323), April, 1982, p.200  
 "What could also be said is that large numbers of Ghanaians and Camerounians in Nigeria were also easily able to penetrate Nigeria's "porous borders" suggesting that the influence of the 90-day visa on the influx may have been exaggerated. Would not the attraction of the oil boom have brought a huge influx anyway?"  
West Africa, 7 February 1983 (ed.)
53. 'Making Mockery of West African Unity', West Africa, 15 December 1975.
54. West Africa, 31 January 1983.
55. Le Monde, 24 May 1979.
56. West Africa, 2 May 1977; Le Monde, 20-21 May 1979; 23 May 1979; 24 May 1979.
57. West Africa, 2 May 1977.
58. Ibid.

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59. West Africa 20 June 1977.  
 "The permanent Secretariat in charge of supervising the non-aggression agreements signed by the six member states of the West African Economic Community (CEAO) will be installed in Abidjan according to the Secretary General of the Community, M. Moussa Ngom of Senegal. The six states covered by the agreement are the Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal, but according to M. Moussa Ngom the pact is open to other countries in the entire region from Nouakchott to Kinshasa."  
West Africa, 27 June 1977.
60. West Africa, 2 May 1977.
61. West Africa, 15 January 1979.
62. Le Monde, 23 May 1979.
63. Speech by His Excellency Lt. General O. Obasanjo, Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria on the occasion of the Second Summit Conference of the ECOWAS, in Lome, Togo, 5 November 1976.
64. Draft Protocol Relating to Non-Aggression Between Member States of ECOWAS, 30 October 1976.
65. This decision was the outcome of discussions between the Nigerian and Togolese Heads of State at Ikeja, 17 June 1977.
66. Report of Meetings of the ECOWAS held in Lagos, 10-22 April 1978, Ministry of External Affairs, 3 May 1978.
67. Ibid.
68. Protocol on Non-Aggression, ECOWAS Policies and Programme Series, No.1, Lagos 1981, pp.21-22.
69. Ibid., Article 5(1) and (2).
70. Decisions of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the ECOWAS relating to the Draft Defence Pacts (A/Dec.14.5.79)  
Official Journal of the ECOWAS, Vol.1, June 1979, p.13.
71. Decisions of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS Relating to Draft Defence Pacts (A/Dec.14.5.79), Official Journal of the ECOWAS, Vol.1, June 1979, p.13.
72. Ibid
73. West Africa, 9 June 1980.
74. Ibid

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75. West Africa, 2 June 1980.
76. West Africa, 9 June 1980.
77. Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defence (A/SP3/5/81).  
Official Journal of the ECOWAS, Vol.3, June 1981, pp.9-11.
78. "What seems to be important at the moment is the creation of the right kind of psychological climate in which cooperation can flourish. This is where the economic approach seems to be the only one that can pay dividends, regardless of politics, as Gowon stresses..... The ECOWAS Defence Pact, the purpose of which some have questioned, is best seen in this psychological content, as are subsidiary groups such as the West African Chamber of Commerce and other professional organisations, helping to make people ECOWAS-minded."  
West Africa, 24 May 1982 (ed.).
79. West Africa, 6 July 1981.
80. A leader article in West Africa, entitled 'Delicate Problems', queried the wisdom of a Mutual Defence Pact at this stage in the Community's development.  
".... it may be that proposals for an ECOWAS defence treaty which have been floated in some quarters would prove more decisive than useful at the moment. (There is, of course, already a protocol of non-aggression.) Against whom are the ECOWAS states to be defended? When does a revolution encouraged from over the border become an invasion? Who is to decide these and other questions? Who will command an ECOWAS force? There are real gains that must not be unduly risked.." West Africa, 1 June 1981.
81. An earlier leader in West Africa, entitled 'ECOWAS and Non-Aggression' recognised both the advantages and the potential problems raised by the Non-Aggression Pact. The big development at the Summit Meeting in Lagos of the Economic Community of West African States were the passing of the protocol of non-aggression. Under this the 16 states agree not to attack each other and recognised as definitive the present borders between them. The proposal to pass such a protocol has been in existence since the beginning of ECOWAS; it is reported that the Somali-Ethiopia, Tanzania-Uganda disputes and others, persuaded the Heads of State and their deputies meeting in Lagos that it was in the Community's interests to pass the protocol now.

It might be agreed by some that a non-aggression agreement is always of doubtful value: if fighting breaks out between states, their pacts, protocols and treaties are automatically put in abeyance. It would be difficult to cite a case from history where a treaty of non-aggression has actually prevented a military offensive. More common have been times when non-aggression pacts have been arguably used by countries in order to prepare for an invasion - the Ribbentrop Pact between the Nazis and the Russians is still fresh in many people's minds and memories. There is no question of anything like that in West Africa

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today, of course, and the present protocol does have a value as a statement of intent and a demonstration of the good will that exists in the region. It is also a concealed criticism of the OAU. Why should such a declaration be needed if the OAU's procedures for preventing and settling disputes were effective?

More important is the fact that this is the first political discussion of ECOWAS. There were obviously strong political overtones in other proposals; about the lowering of tariffs, for instance, or the eventual alignment of currencies, or the freedom of movement of people between countries. But it can be argued that they involve basically economic decisions: making war can only be a political decision. The sovereignty of the individual nations has been restricted in a new area. This is not necessarily a bad thing; the whole idea of setting up ECOWAS involved the surrender of a degree of sovereignty by the members, and this has been made clear from the start. But unexceptionable in itself : few countries are themselves potential aggressors and everyone is in favour of peace, particularly when their vital interests are not threatened. But it is also the first step on a path that will require most careful and skilful treading" West Africa, 1 May 1978 (ed.)

## CONCLUSION

The signing of the ECOWAS Treaty in May 1975 and its subsequent ratification must be seen as the outcome of long, arduous and continuing diplomatic efforts to establish a viable and functional economic community politically acceptable to all the West African states. It brings into focus the various social, political and economic problems that all developing countries have had to confront in their attempt to secure economic development and growth. The ECOWAS experiment in 'economic integration' gives us an opportunity to study in depth - thanks to the source materials now available - the different elements involved in such a cooperative exercise, the obstacles and constraints encountered, and the ways in which at least some of these have been overcome or are on the way to a solution.

A pertinent question regarding the West African countries, or any other group of developing countries for that matter, is why they have chosen to make such an experiment and why they persist in that endeavour despite the inevitable setbacks and the high failure rate among comparable communities? What they hoped to achieve by it? Why it took so long to materialise? and why ECOWAS finally emerged when it did? These are among the questions I have attempted to answer in the course of the thesis. As I have been mainly concerned with the formation of ECOWAS and the establishment of its key institutions and agencies, the emphasis throughout has been on political rather than economic factors, although the performance of ECOWAS will be judged more by economic than by political criteria.

Long before 1945, state and later national boundaries were perceived as an obstacle to the development of trade and to economic growth. However, the undoubted success of the European Economic Community (EEC) has been the point of departure for groupings of a predominantly regional and economic nature. This has been the case notably in the Third World, where the concern with independence and development has been thwarted by the existence of colonial boundaries and inherited patterns of trade and 'dependency' that have seldom been conducive to independence or to development. Political independence, far from resolving the problem or alleviating the constraints, economic and political, has served to generate new pressures and impose additional constraints on the governments concerned.

Sometimes the problems encountered by Third World governments were of their own making. More often, however, they were the product of external forces and events beyond their control or influence. The only way to change the situation to their advantage was to cooperate among themselves, particularly in their dealings with the advanced nations. Policies of economic nationalism pursued after independence underlined the inadequacy of existing markets and the chronic shortage of investment. Scarce resources were wasted as identical industries were created in neighbouring countries excluding the possibility of economies of scale or the benefits of specialisation.

Increasingly the answer appeared to be cooperation among the new states, at the regional level where it was most practical and most likely to be effective. For the West African states in particular, economic development

and growth and the achievement of a measure of self-reliance were out of reach for most of the countries on account of their extremely low economic base, the absence of resources, lack of industry, deficiency of rainfall, and weak infra-structure. The leaders saw no reason why the benefits of economic integration should be confined to the European and industrial economies : why their states should not also cooperate to promote their economic and social development.

Where the customary 'static' benefits to be derived from regional integration may be restricted to predominantly industrial economies, there are other more 'dynamic' effects associated with such communities. Here it is a question not of securing small additional increments to existing growth and welfare levels, but rather of generating development in otherwise under-developed countries. The emphasis is much less on removing barriers to present trade and encouraging greater specialisation, and much more on the re-orientation of trade away from customary products and traditional (mainly colonial) markets. In this way it is hoped to provide greater incentives for local manufacturing to encourage product diversification, attract external investment and stimulate joint exploitation of energy and mineral resources. (Table 10).

Of the West African states Nigeria is one of the fortunate few that might be able to develop alone, by expanding the domestic market, by policies of agricultural and self-sufficiency, by export diversification and by an aggressive marketing policy at home and, more particularly, abroad. Even then it is difficult to see how Nigeria alone could circumvent the tariff and other barriers that were being erected within the region and elsewhere

TABLE 10

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS OF SELECTED WEST AFRICAN  
COUNTRIES

DAHOMEY (BENIN)	Palm products, cotton, fish.
IVORY COAST	Coffee, cocoa, timber, bananas
THE GAMBIA	Groundnuts.
GHANA	Gold, diamonds, timber, aluminium, cocoa.
MALI	Rice, cotton, groundnuts, livestock, fish.
MAURITANIA	Iron ore, copper, gum, gum arabic, fish.
NIGER	Groundnuts, livestock, uranium.
NIGERIA	Crude petroleum, tin, ground nuts, palm products, rubber, cocoa, cotton, timber.
SENEGAL	Groundnuts, phosphate, fish, manufactures.
SIERRA LEONE	Diamonds, iron ore, bauxite, palm kernels, coffee, cocoa, ginger, kolanuts.
TOGO	Phosphate, cocoa, coffee.
UPPER VOLTA	Livestock, cotton, groundnuts.

Source: Central Bank of Nigeria, Economic and Financial Review, 10, 1 (June 1972).

J.P.Renninger, Multinational Cooperation for Development in West Africa.



in the world. And it is doubtful whether the Nigerian market is itself sufficiently large and prosperous to sustain an important and eventually competitive manufacturing base. Despite its large and rapidly growing population, its oil and agriculture, Nigeria has more in common, nevertheless, with its smaller neighbours than with either the advanced industrial nations or the wealthy and small oil states of the Middle East. Because of its population and its under-development Nigeria remains vulnerable to price fluctuations for its major export commodity and to sudden climatic variations where food production is concerned.

Regional economic integration did seem to provide a more reliable and rational basis for ordering our economic priorities and a more effective means of promoting economic and social development throughout the region. Such cooperation would also encourage 'collective self-reliance' on the part of the member states of the community and would hopefully, permit the kind of structural changes that could not easily be undertaken within existing colonial and linguistic frontiers. Without industrialisation a strategy of agricultural diversification offered little immediate prospect of economic improvement for most states in the region, especially those of the Sahel, whose populations were as familiar with drought as with visiting aid personnel and often conflicting advice.

Among the first generation of West African leaders, after independence, long-term economic considerations were too often subordinated to short-term political imperatives. The result was a number of groupings,

regional and continental, beginning with the Ghana -Guinea Union and later the Union of African States, where the economic objectives were clearly subordinate to ideological ones. For President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, regional or sub-regional organisation was at best a step towards and, at worst, an obstacle to continental unity under a single African government. By political integration he hoped to circumvent the long process of consultation necessary if there was to be consensus among individual governments on the goals and methods of economic development.

But there were no short-cuts to economic cooperation, as was clear from the failure of the Union of African States and the earlier collapse of the Mali Federation, integrating Mali and Senegal, which was to have provided the political nucleus for a regional community of the Francophone states. Other West African leaders saw such moves as a threat to their new-won sovereignty and independence. Nigeria quickly stated its preference for a gradual approach to political unity, through inter-governmental cooperation at a regional level with the emphasis on developing economic and functional linkages. On the whole, groupings that were less politically and ideologically oriented and more economic and functional in character, such as the Council of the Entente, proved more successful in retaining the support of their members. And it was this pattern that would later be followed in the 'seventies by both the Francophone West African Economic Community (CEAO) and our own ECOWAS. Cooperation and consensus would be the basis of all future efforts at integration within the region.

It was nevertheless to be admitted that subsequent attempts at economic integration in West Africa, in the 'sixties and early 'seventies fared little better on account of the contingent nature of the strategies adopted and the extent to which such schemes continued to reflect more immediate political considerations rather than long-term social and economic preoccupations. In that period, however, there did emerge another generation of West African leaders, often but not always from a military background, and concerned above all with the mounting economic problems of their states and the failure of existing policies and programmes to resolve them. Political instability threatened to become endemic unless governments were able to coordinate their economic policies and cooperate to develop their economies. It was not that they were any less concerned with national interests and independence; rather that they saw no prospect of achieving either without some sacrifice of sovereignty.

They were influenced and greatly assisted by the advice of specialist teams from the various United Nations' agencies and, in particular, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), whose influence grew as its leading personnel came to be drawn from the African states themselves and could therefore communicate more readily with African governments and respond to African needs. The many reports, conferences and papers emanating from the ECA and various other international agencies, all drew attention to the advantages of industrialisation which could best be achieved through regional cooperation, economic diversification and the creation of larger and more reliable markets. Here the advantages of the region over smaller and larger units were quickly appreciated while the boundaries of the proposed African regions aroused little controversy at the time, although there was discussion about West Africa's eastern border.

Just as important were the examples of the EEC itself, as a successful functioning regional entity, and the various regional experiments in South and Central America, the West Indies and South-East Asia, although these included many failures alongside a very few successes. Closer to home there was the example of the East African Community, whose final collapse in 1975-77 unhappily coincided with the establishment of ECOWAS. But the EAC was essentially a colonial creation that had survived independence, but only in a modified form, whereas ECOWAS was conceived as a reaction against colonial frontiers and inherited economic structures. Small communities like the EAC are also much more vulnerable to sudden changes at the top, where our own larger grouping has repeatedly shown its ability to accommodate such changes without precipitating a crisis within the organisation itself.

We also had, in West Africa, the experience of the Common Services, which operated among the English-speaking states until Ghana's independence in 1957, and which, to some extent, we had later to reconstruct with considerable difficulty in our pursuit of cooperation across existing borders. The Francophone states had their own continuing history of regional integration, both administrative and economic, including, before independence, the West African Federation (AOF), and later such organisations as the UAM, UAMCE and OCAM which, although continental in scope, were largely West African in leadership and inspiration. There were also such economic associations as the Franc zone, grouping countries in several regions, the Customs Unions (UDEAO in West Africa and the more successful UDEAC), as well as regional banking, monetary and commercial arrangements. The Francophone groupings served mainly, however, to integrate their African members with the metropole rather than to enhance the prospects for inter-African cooperation, which was surely the first objective of a West African regional economic community.

The main obstacles to regional integration in West Africa I have defined first as the appearance in the early 'sixties of political and ideological differences within the region, so that the more specific economic objectives were soon overtaken by ambitious political schemes seeking to encompass the continent as a whole. And as the ideological divisions began to recede even before the creation of the Organisation of African Unity in 1963, while economic preoccupations came to the forefront, there were the problems posed by colonial dependency and the cultural, economic and political legacy of the three West European states that had been involved in the area up to independence. Excluding the Portuguese territory of Guinea-Bissau, still fighting for its independence, there were the states associated with the Commonwealth and the system of economic preference, and there were the Francophone states, the majority, who with the exception of Guinea (and the part-exception of Mali) were bound to France by various cooperation agreements.

West Africa was the one region of the continent where colonial boundaries, linguistic, cultural and monetary, were the major obstacles to economic cooperation and eventual integration. In East Africa the three states involved in the EAC were all former British colonies, just as the states of the Maghreb were Francophone and Arabic speaking. The Central and Equatorial African groupings were exclusively Francophone in character, formerly ruled by France and Belgium, while the southern African states were predominantly British - with the important exceptions of Angola and Mozambique after 1975 - but drawn together, nevertheless, by the proximity of white-ruled South Africa. The linguistic division in West Africa was accentuated after independence by the aggressive policies of Ghana towards

its Francophone neighbours, while the Nigerian leaders worked hard to convince the Francophone states that their size and economic potential did not constitute a threat to the other, smaller states of the region. The main themes of Nigerian foreign policy in this period were respect for existing states within their present frontiers, on the one hand, and the promotion of trade and economic cooperation on the other.

Unfortunately, Nigerian unity was itself threatened for a time and the civil war, 1967-1970, can be seen as yet another obstacle to West African unity, coinciding as it did with the abortive attempts to construct a Regional Group, undertaken on the initiative of Senegal and some of her immediate neighbours. The civil war restricted the extent of our own contribution to that worthy enterprise, although our support for it was in no way diminished and continued until the end. The civil war also added to the existing divisions among the Francophone states, since our immediate neighbours supported the cause of Nigeria while the Ivory Coast and France, itself, came to support the rebellion. Rather than the civil war it was the rivalries among the Francophone states, particularly between Senegal and the Ivory Coast, contending for political leadership and economic primacy within the region, that brought about the failure of the Regional Group. Meanwhile, there was the continuing antagonism between the two leading, conservative Francophone states, and Guinea (Conakry), with its radical government. This had threatened to erupt into open confrontation at the time of Nkrumah's overthrow, in February 1966, and it would again become a very serious issue following the abortive invasion of Guinea in November 1970.

I have argued that the 'seventies were more favourable to regional integration, with the successful resolution of the civil war in Nigeria, accompanied by a policy of reconciliation towards all those who had opposed us, at home and abroad. Fear of Nigeria, that had largely dictated the hostile attitude of some Francophone states during the civil war, began at last to recede - the more so as our immediate neighbours began to derive considerable benefit from the oil-boom in Nigeria without having to sacrifice anything of their independence. Our relations with France also began to improve with the end of the war and the retirement of President de Gaulle. At the same time the French presence in West Africa became less prominent, while the Francophone states demanded the re-negotiation of their cooperation agreements. The entry of Great Britain into the Common Market led to demands among the Francophone African states for improved economic relations with their Anglophone partners in the region - to complement the new rapprochement within the EEC. Finally, in the early 'seventies, the Ivory Coast and Senegal at last made common cause in the interests of regional integration, even if the community they proposed was much narrower than the one that we in Nigeria envisaged and, being confined to the Francophone states, was interpreted by some as an attempt to contain Nigeria's growing influence.

The global economic crisis, following the 1973 Middle East war, served to remind West African leaders of their economic vulnerability when confronted with a situation over which they, as individual states, had little influence and less control. The metropolises, moreover, seemed more concerned with their economic rivalry and survival than with the predicament of their African associates. Coinciding as it did with a prolonged drought in the

Sahel region, and the big jump in oil prices, the economic conjuncture was particularly discouraging for most West African states and their leaders. These difficulties and Nigeria's material assistance acted as a catalyst to overcome any remaining doubts or suspicions. Regional integration was not, however, simply a response by governments to external economic crisis. The movement towards integration was already strong in the late 'sixties and in the meantime most of the obstacles had been or were in the process of being removed. All countries within the region had expressed the wish to be associated within an economic community that would bridge the linguistic divide.

After 1970 Nigeria came to identify much more completely with Africa and with the region of which it is an integral part. The first tangible evidence of that was the celebration in Lagos of the tenth anniversary of our independence, when Heads of State and plenipotentiaries assembled from all over Africa, and where the question of West African economic integration was once again discussed. More tangible evidence of the renewed interest in a regional grouping was the decision by Nigeria and Togo, in 1972, to form the nucleus of a proposed economic community. That partnership, which has endured to the present, contributed greatly to the improvement of relations throughout the region. The cooperation of the two countries has been of inestimable benefit to the community as a whole and it was appropriate, therefore, that they should have been chosen, in 1976, to house the key institutions of the Community, the Secretariat and the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development.



Meanwhile, Nigeria which enjoyed greatly expanded revenue as a result of increased oil production and higher prices, was able to use its new advantageous position for the lasting benefit of all the states of the region. But the policy of reconciliation and the drive for economic cooperation were based in the main on national as well as African integration. Nigeria had survived the civil war, thanks in good part to the loyal support of her Francophone neighbours. To continue as one nation, Nigeria had not only to develop its own resources and ensure their equitable redistribution within the country, but had also to win the confidence and trust of the other states of the region. Then, as now, increased trade and economic cooperation within West Africa seemed to offer the best prospects for peaceful co-existence and the most reliable basis for a profitable collaboration.

The first product of that new collaboration was the widely-acclaimed agreement of association concluded at Lomé, Togo, at the beginning of 1975, between the EEC and the African-Caribbean-Pacific states. And in May of that same year the Summit of West African Heads of State and Plenipotentiaries, meeting in Lagos, agreed to the establishment of ECOWAS. Since then even those states who were formerly apprehensive about Nigeria's intentions towards her partners in the region, have since come to appreciate the value of Nigeria's support for the community. The growing friendship and closer economic ties between Nigeria and the Ivory Coast, particularly after 1973, has served the cause of ECOWAS well. The trade agreement between the two states, signed in March 1982, provides for most-favoured nation status in respect of many items originating in either state. It will continue in the first instance for three years. <sup>1/</sup>

Even Senegal which, under President Senghor, was first a strong advocate of regional integration in the 'sixties, and then, in the 'seventies, the leading critic of certain aspects of our community, has, since 1978, associated itself more closely with ECOWAS. In October 1983 Senghor's successor as President, Abdou Diouf, concluded an interview with what he described as "a profession of faith".

I am convinced that, whatever the quality of the administration of our states, taken individually, whatever the capacity of our rulers, we will not get very far in the context of our own little states. I am a fierce partisan of the economic integration of our continent and even of its eventual political integration. I would be very happy if one day we had a West Africa integrated first economically, then politically, because that would permit millions and millions of Africans to possess a great state instrument allowing the creation of a great deal of good in Africa. But in the framework of our mini-states we will make mini-progress. We will not take the giant steps needed by our countries to ensure their progress. I am a fierce partisan of integration at all levels, and hope that all heads of state have the same faith in this integration, and that we will realise it as soon as possible.

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It was never intended that such a large and heterogeneous community as ECOWAS, having taken so long to emerge in the first place, would then develop so quickly as to accomplish miracles of economic integration and development. Those responsible for drafting and approving the ECOWAS Treaty and the subsequent Protocols have, therefore, provided for a realistic time-table according to which implementation of the objectives can be accomplished step by step and within a predetermined time-scale. The sooner the process is completed the better for all the countries concerned. But we have seen that there are no short cuts to development and there is no adequate or satisfactory substitute for cooperation and consensus among all the states involved.

The ECOWAS Treaty invites the Council of Ministers to "take steps to reduce gradually the Community's economic dependence on the outside world and strengthen economic relations among themselves." ECOWAS and similar bodies have been criticised by some writers who maintain that regional economic integration serves only to increase rather than reduce dependency on external sources of investment, trade and technology.<sup>3/</sup> That was certainly not the view of the American government which was hostile to the Andean Pact and its provisions to control foreign investment, and it would not explain France's prolonged opposition to the association of French and English-speaking states within a single West African grouping.

Other writers, like W.A.Axline and J.P.Renninger, maintain that regional cooperation in the Third World can be used to combat dependency and to stimulate development that is based instead, on 'collective self-reliance'. But that depends, in their view, on whether such communities are able to evolve rapidly towards 'higher' forms of integration (e.g. customs union, common market). For it is only then that substantial benefits can be derived by member states, that centralised planning machinery can be established to secure the equitable distribution of those benefits, and that policies can be sufficiently coordinated so as to offset external and other unfavourable pressures. Failing which regional communities of under-developed countries are likely to succumb to outside forces (dependency), internal tensions (backwash) or, most likely, to a combination of the two.

However, the ECOWAS Treaty does, as Renninger recognises, provide for various forms of association among member states including a free trade

area, customs union and common market, depending on the circumstances and the disposition of the member states and their governments. While the greatest benefits may well be derived from more advanced forms of integration, members can look forward to important and tangible benefits at each and every state of the integration process. ECOWAS also has elaborate compensation procedures to assist the less developed states which are also likely to be those most heavily dependent on customs duties as a source of government income. In the absence of such provisions they would, of course, stand to lose heavily from the abolition or even the reduction of tariffs.

With the establishment of the Fund there is also provision for the creation of approved industries in states otherwise unable to attract sufficient capital investment. The risks of 'backwash' are thereby considerably reduced. And to try to ensure greater equity of treatment, the countries of the region have now been classified into three groups according to the level of their industrial development, the importance of customs revenue as a proportion of their national budget, and the special problems that result from relative inaccessibility and poor communications, particularly in the case of our land-locked and island members of the community.

ECOWAS does certainly aim to reduce external dependency and, to that end, encourages inter-state cooperation within the region and between ECOWAS and other comparable groupings. Renninger contends, however, that "although ECOWAS can undoubtedly contribute to the collective self-reliance of the West African sub-region, it will not, by itself, be able to achieve collective self-reliance." <sup>4/</sup> The reason is that there is

no "institution or body in ECOWAS ... empowered to negotiate with outside forces on behalf of ECOWAS." <sup>5/</sup> However, while closer cooperation among member states is likely to enhance their bargaining power - political unity - in whatever sense - in international negotiations, must be seen as a long-term goal. Nigerian governments have always maintained that complete integration, while eminently desirable as an ultimate objective, could only be reached as a result of long consultation and eminently desirable as following the emergence of a broad consensus among all the member states. As Renninger correctly perceives the first years are crucial ones for ECOWAS. "In this initial period progress can only be incremental." <sup>6/</sup>

The basis of the 'integration with more haste' argument is as much political as economic and may even seem to cast doubt on the usefulness or viability of regional groupings in a Third World context. For, if it is true that "at the outset a higher level of integration is necessary in developing countries than is the case with industrialised countries", then the outlook for communities such as ECOWAS was not promising since "Much advanced forms of integration presuppose an abrogation of sovereignty that, for political reasons, few leaders of developing countries are willing to contemplate." <sup>7/</sup> But, as Renninger himself insists, there is now a few factor to be considered, namely the growing significance of the international situation for all countries, but especially for those in search of development.

In the past, few political leaders in the developing world were willing to give up even an insignificant amount of their freedom of action. But today the international environment is leading to changed perceptions as political leaders come to the realisation that only through cooperation can their countries hope to achieve their developmental goals. <sup>8/</sup>

And that is what I have tried to demonstrate in the case of ECOWAS. The negotiations and successful conclusion of the Lomé Convention in 1975 was evidence of the way in which developing countries, from different parts of the world, and with different interests to protect, could nevertheless collaborate, effectively, in the pursuit of common goals without necessarily establishing elaborate integrative mechanisms. In that respect the various ECOWAS institutions, although very much dependent on a consensus among the member states, are a considerable advance on the *ad hoc* agencies that conducted the Lomé negotiations.

Like most other large and complex organisations, ECOWAS has had its growing pains. The instability of particular governments and leaders is always a problem in any African community and there have now been several changes of administration in the community's biggest state, Nigeria. But ECOWAS, thanks partly to the multiplicity of member states, partly to the experience gained in all the long formative phase of the community, has managed to overcome all such difficulties successfully. Temporary misunderstandings between Nigeria and Togo, during 1975-76, would seem to have delayed agreement on the proposed ECOWAS institutions, their staffing and location. But once again a good working relationship was quickly re-established during 1976.

The subsequent quarrel involving the chief executives of the new community institutions, the Secretariat and the Fund, arose from the ambiguity to be found in the Treaty concerning their respective role and functions. At issue was the question of responsibility for the administration

of the community reflecting the inevitable tensions between countries of different size, resources and background and some degree of identification between governments and their nominees in the community institutions. By the end of the 'seventies, however, a good working relationship had been restored between the principal ECOWAS officials, while the authority of the Executive Secretary was confirmed by the Summit so as to ensure that there would be no similar disputes in the future.

With the implementation of the protocols concerning liberalisation of trade, free movement of persons, the non-aggression agreement and the defence pact, ECOWAS was well and truly established and began to develop close working relationships with other international organisations. Where some have stressed the difficulty of getting agreement on measures involving the sacrifice of sovereignty, compared with the greater ease with which governments will consent to functional integration involving on-going economic relationships, ECOWAS seems to have moved much more quickly on several highly sensitive political issues than on the economic front. This is less surprising in the West African context, however, where leaders have long been accustomed to cooperating on political issues, in the context of the OAU and other bodies, but where economic cooperation presents numerous administrative as well as political problems.

Indeed, West African leaders probably meet more frequently in various councils and communicate more regularly than their counterparts in Western Europe. While this should generate a sense of trust and facilitate

the development of mutual understanding, particularly among leaders of similar background, age and outlook, it does tend also to obviate the need for more frequent contacts at a senior administrative level. There may well be a tendency, too, notably in the first years, to delegate less responsibility to the new Community officials than is the case within the now well-established EEC. This is most obvious in the case of decisions on complex technical and economic matters, where the ground-rules of the community are still being formulated. Thus the most protracted and difficult debates within ECOWAS have been concerned with the classification of community goods, definition of their place of origin and the degree of foreign input permitted, the adoption of a common customs nomenclature, detailed arrangements for compensation for revenue lost, and a time-table for eliminating barriers to inter-state trade on specified items.

By way of contrast, freedom of movement of persons between and among member states was approved and implemented with remarkable speed given the political and social problems that it presents, particularly, in the absence of common legislation or agreement regarding social security, minimum wages, job classification and region-wide data indicating where there is a shortage of skills within the community and where there is already a surplus of labour. There is also the problem of securing common immigration regulations and making provision for the repatriation of earnings. The decision was initially popular throughout the region, establishing as it did the concept of an ECOWAS citizen. Nigeria, which was to be the main focus for immigration, given its relative prosperity at the time, hastened to comply with ECOWAS directives. Then, with the economic setback in January 1983, there was the regrettable incident when large numbers of Ghanaian and other illegal immigrants from the Region and other parts of Africa, were deported



from the country. ECOWAS governments have, however, shown considerable maturity in refusing to condemn the Nigerian action, perhaps because in many cases they had experienced similar problems themselves.

The adoption of the non-aggression agreement and the defence pact were a response largely to events outside the region : the confrontation in the Horn of Africa and, nearer home, the Western Sahara issue and the new Libyan interest in the Sahel states of the region. The principle of non-aggression was already embodied in the Charter of the OAU and would seem to be a pre-requisite for any stable community. Those responsible for the creation of ECOWAS had envisaged the possibility of measures for the common defence of the region, but within the context of the OAU and only after economic integration and other forms of regional cooperation were much more advanced. In the event it is difficult to see how the defence provisions can be effectively implemented in the case of a military crisis - where prompt action is clearly required. The problems of creating a multi-national force are large, even in the case of NATO and the West European industrial powers. On a more positive note the ECOWAS Summit in May 1983 was responsible for a major and successful foreign policy initiative. This was the collective decision by all ECOWAS leaders to attend the OAU Summit in Addis Ababa, thereby ending the crisis within the OAU arising from the failure of the earlier Summit due to have been held in Tripoli. 9/

But it is in the economic sphere that the success of ECOWAS will be decided. The problems here are numerous and substantial and

derive mainly from the very different colonial backgrounds of the Francophone and other states, together with the different levels of growth achieved since independence, and the structural disparities between coastal and inland states. The existence of so many and such different monetary arrangements is yet another complication for states wishing to undertake trade liberalisation and for an organisation one of whose objectives is integration and a form of economic union. Besides arrangements for a West African Clearing House consisting of the various central banks within the region, studies are now being undertaken whose aim is the creation of an ECOWAS Monetary Zone. There can be no doubt about the wisdom of ensuring ready convertibility, at agreed rates, between the currencies circulating within the region. Meanwhile the community continues along the path to greater trade liberalisation despite these and other obstacles. As was pointed out in May 1983, following the ECOWAS Summit in Conakry, Guinea:

... the acceptance of a single trade liberalisation scheme by ECOWAS leaders here is in keeping with the Lagos Plan of Action, which envisages the setting up of an African common market by the year 2000.

10/

To this end the Francophone sub-regional grouping, the CEAO, has now been invited by ECOWAS to merge its aims and aspirations with those of the larger community so as to avoid wasteful duplication of efforts and facilitate the creation of a regional customs union. The acceptance of this resolution, at Conakry in 1983, should end the dispute between the majority and those member states that wish to take advantage of the 'derogation' arrangements in the Treaty, permitting members in certain

circumstances to postpone compliance with ECOWAS decisions. Indeed, writers such as R.I.Onwuka and J.P.Renninger had seen 'derogation' and the presence within the region of two important groupings, ECOWAS and the CEAO, with overlapping but not entirely consistent aims, as a source of possible future difficulty for the larger community. <sup>11/</sup> Certainly the CEAO has the 'advantage' of a small number of states with a common currency, similar administration and a shared colonial background. It should be much easier for such a grouping to advance more quickly towards its objectives.

It is a linguistic community - in government, at least; it is territorially contiguous; its member states bear the same powerful imprint of their French colonial past; they have close ties with France today and most important of all they are all linked to the franc zone.

<sup>12/</sup>

However, the benefits to be derived from cooperation within such a restricted community, with a small population and limited resources, are not to be compared with those that can be achieved in the context of a West African regional community of states. Certainly the CEAO Summit in November 1980 showed to what extent the Francophone states were affected adversely by the earlier rise in oil prices and the simultaneous and sharp drop in commodity and uranium prices. Not only have development projects been cancelled, but the incoming chairman of the community, President Senghor, called for immediate consultations on regional projects between CEAO and ECOWAS, with talks between their respective secretariats to see how their respective resources could best be pooled.

One hopes that people have paid heed to President Senghor's sincere call for more cooperation between CEAO and ECOWAS. Whereas comments of a similar type have been made in the past they have usually been too impregnated with the diplomatic niceties that relations between such organisations demand. In this case, however, there is a marked difference. President Senghor's was a plea for the whole of West Africa. It was also a plea to Nigeria, which is the cornerstone of ECOWAS. If dependence on foreign assistance has to be reduced, as the CEAO leaders have said, then integration is an essential first step. 13/

President Houphouët-Boigny has also spoken out to the effect that once ECOWAS takes off, its size and potential were such that the CEAO would eventually be absorbed into the new body. And that is my own conviction. It also seems to be the view of Senghor's successor as president of Senegal, Abdou Diouf. Asked if ECOWAS was being held back by the CEAO and whether the two organisations should merge, he replied:

It is in everybody's interest that if ECOWAS reaches its cruising speed, the CEAO should normally melt into the structures of ECOWAS - no problem, it will become a sub-grouping of ECOWAS, or a specialised institution of ECOWAS, or it could disappear completely. We are convinced that the future is with ECOWAS; if ECOWAS reaches its cruising speed, and overcomes its present difficulties. What we do not want, we members of CEAO, is to be asked to eliminate something that works well, that produces brilliant results - CEAO, while ECOWAS has not reached cruising speed. It is a false argument to say CEAO is a brake on the progress of ECOWAS. The real reasons are elsewhere, not in the existence of CEAO. 14/

There is also the question of the smaller sub-regional organisations, largely a legacy from the 'sixties which nevertheless persist and in some cases are continuing to carry out functions for which ECOWAS is better-suited.

They may distract attention from ECOWAS and even compete for scarce resources and investment, but they do not threaten our community in any way. At the ECOWAS Summit in 1983 President Shagari of Nigeria was nevertheless justified in expressing "serious concern" at

...the proliferation of inter-governmental organisations in our sub-region with very similar aims and objectives. There seems to me to be an urgent need to streamline the existing institutions in the interest of our economies and eliminate institutional overlaps or conflicts of objectives which only hamper our march towards the achievements of our desired development goals.

15/

It was the view of the ECOWAS founders that other organisations in the region should in future confine themselves to specialised functions and that, as President Shagari suggested,

... those that are not so geared should be wound up in the interest of solidarity and optimal utilisation of limited resources to fewer organisations that we can more adequately support to pursue our objectives.

16/

Also at the 1983 Summit of ECOWAS the Liberian Head of State spoke of "the concern of possible conflict which the Mano River Union ... causes for ECOWAS." But, in defence of such groupings, he continued : "We must realise that a small group of countries can promote economic cooperation and integration more rapidly than a larger group." Moreover, "countries that are more or less at the same level of development when grouped together, will find it easier to agree on specific projects which would be impossible if there were wide differences between these countries." 17/

While it may be more convenient, however, to organise cooperation among neighbouring states, it is precisely at that level that friction can be most marked and its effects can be most serious. Thus in 1983, the border between Liberia and Sierra Leone was closed after a dispute involving the two founding-members of the Mano River Union, when two thousand four hundred Liberian troops were sent to police the common frontier.<sup>18/</sup> ECOWAS not only offers the best means of attracting the necessary capital for much-needed investment, and the most equitable means of distributing that investment among the member states, it is also the most appropriate forum for the discussion of economic issues that affect the development of the entire region.

The problems of the smaller bodies were well illustrated at the June 1983 conference of the eight-nation Niger River Basin Authority (NBA). "The meeting was brief and lacked general enthusiasm. This was an indication of a growing disillusionment among the leaders about too many tiny organisations in the West African sub-region whose only achievement is to meet annually in cosy surroundings and make the same marathon speeches."<sup>19/</sup> Otherwise the final communique was reported to contain nothing that was in any way specific, despite the presence of four Heads of State.

The most serious threat to ECOWAS is not 'derogation' or rivalry between the larger organisation and such bodies as the CEAO - still less the Mano River Union or the Senegal and Gambia River Organisations.<sup>20/</sup> Rather it is the possibility, fortunately remote, that Nigeria's commitment to ECOWAS might weaken, given economic difficulties at home and a sense of

disappointment that ECOWAS has still to reach its potential. As President Shagari warned at the 1983 ECOWAS Summit:

... times are hard ... and we cannot afford to be extravagant ... The sizeable sums of money spent annually to maintain the community's institutions including the secretariat, as well as the time, sums and energy spent /in meetings and deliberations/ cannot be justified if we allow ECOWAS to degenerate into a talking shop where very little concrete action is realised. 21/

The time would seem to be appropriate for a re-affirmation by all member states of their total commitment to ECOWAS, its ideals and objectives. There is a pressing need for the governments involved to revive the enthusiasm and sense of purpose that were so much in evidence at the first Lagos Summit in 1975. And it is tangible results that are required now, if only to show in a practical way that cooperation works, that successful cooperation begins at home and among West African states, and that multilateral cooperation is preferable to any number of bilateral arrangements. The Lomé Agreement was sufficient evidence of what can be accomplished and the benefits to be derived from closer cooperation in the economic sphere.

ECOWAS was born out of the aspirations of governments and peoples in the region for a better way of life and an improvement in their material circumstances and social welfare, and it is by these criteria that the performance of ECOWAS will continue to be judged. The best incentive of further and closer cooperation is the commencement and

completion of specific projects of benefit to the region as a whole. There is, of course, much more to ECOWAS than this, as I have tried to show. But in order to accomplish the more exalted and ambitious goals the community must first win and retain the confidence of each and every member state and earn the trust of the West African peoples.

What the governments of Nigeria, and Togo, together, were able to achieve in 1972 may, hopefully, serve as an inspiration and an encouragement to the present leaders of the region who have once again to confront an unfavourable international economic situation not of their making. In these circumstances governments have no alternative but to cooperate and there now exists an institutional framework for such cooperation within West Africa. Having persevered for so long and against such odds with the creation and establishment of ECOWAS, it is essential that all concerned continue to work for the success of the community, the development of the region and the unity of Africa.



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9. West Africa, 31 October, 1983.
10. West Africa, 6 June 1983.
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"The problem of smaller groupings within larger groupings is at its most vivid within ECOWAS. However, where you have under the wider umbrella smaller units, like CEAO, the Mano River Union and Senegambia, these claim that there is no reason why the smaller should not coexist within the larger, like the Benelux countries within the EEC, but it has become apparent that the deeper homogeneity of the CEAO can begin to undermine the wider grouping."  
West Africa, 3 January 1983 (ed.).
12. West Africa, 3 November 1980.
13. Ibid.
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20. "It has to be the bigger groups that undermine aspirations, and these are all, even ECOWAS, more in the future than the present. To give them some substance is the only challenge available for those who would pursue unity in the 1980s."  
West Africa, 3 January 1983 (ed.)  
The same editorial referred to the persistence of "an organisation like OCAM /which/ seems marginal to the point of fading away altogether".
21. West Africa, 6 June 1983.  
"It cannot honestly be said that ECOWAS has any remarkable achievements yet to its credit. Its main ~~virtue~~ is to exist at all, in the face of the complex tissue of relations that characterise the 16 states of the West African sub-region. It is also ahead of any other groupings elsewhere in Africa; and in West Africa serves not only as an umbrella for all the other groupings of the region (CEAO, Mano River Union, Entente Council, Senegal and Gambia River Organisations, et.al.) but aspires to be much more than all of them, a genuinely regional organisation that tackles all the main divergences and contradictions in the region".  
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TABLE 1

THE COUNTRIES OF WEST AFRICA

	Area (sq.kl.)	Population <sup>1</sup> 1975	Density (per sq. kl.)	Date of Independence	Former Colonial Power
BENIN	112,622	3,112,000	28	August 1 1960	France
CAPE VERDE	4,033	294,000	73	July 5, 1973	Portugal
THE GAMBIA	11,295	524,000	46	Feb. 18, 1963	United Kingdom
GHANA	238,537	9,866,000	41	March 6, 1957	United Kingdom
GUINEA	245,957	4,416,000	18	October 2, 1958	France
GUINEA-BISSAU	36,129	525,000	15	Sept. 10, 1974	Portugal
IVORY COAST	322,463	6,673,000 <sup>2</sup>	21	August 7, 1960	France
LIBERIA	111,369	1,708,000	15	July 26, 1857	France
MALI	1,240,000	5,697,000	5	Sept. 22, 1960	France
MAURITANIA	1,030,700	1,318,000	1	Nov. 28, 1960	France
NIGER	1,267,000	4,600,000	4	August 3, 1960	France
NIGERIA	923,768	62,925,000	68	October 1, 1960	United Kingdom
SENEGAL	196,192	5,085,000 <sup>2</sup>	26	August 20, 1960	France
SIERRA LEONE	71,740	2,729,000 <sup>2</sup>	38	April 27, 1961	United Kingdom
TOGO	56,000	2,222,000	40	April 27, 1960	France
UPPFR VOLTA	274,200	6,032,000	22	August 5, 1960	France

Source: (1) Demographic Yearbook, 1975 (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E/F.76.XIII.1.1977), Table 3. These figures are mid-year estimates.

(2) These figures are from the United Nations "Population and Vital Statistics Report," Statistical Papers Series A, Volume XXVII, No. 4, 1976.

**TABLE 2**  
**1968 MATRIX OF WEST AFRICAN TRADE (in million US dollars)**

Exporting Countries	Dahomey	Gambia	Ghana	Guinea B.	Guinea R.	Ivory Coast	Liberia	Mali	Mauritania	Niger	Nigeria	Senegal	Sierra Leone	Togo	Upper Volta	Total W. Africa	Total E.E.C.	World	W.A./World	E.E.C./World
Dahomey	-	-	0.45	-	-	0.34	-	-	-	0.14	1.20	6.20	-	1.31	-	3.38	12.93	2	1	1
Gambia	-	-	0.06	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.02	0.02	1.13	6.12	-	-	1.2	12.23	2	1	1
Ghana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.42	-	6.12	0.20	-	1.4	18.36	2	1	1
Guinea B.	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.05	-	-	-	-	6.64	-	-	-	6.64	-	2	1	1
Guinea R.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.64	-	-	-	6.64	-	2	1	1
Ivory Coast	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Liberia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Mali	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Mauritania	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Niger	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Nigeria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Senegal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Sierra Leone	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Togo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Upper Volta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Total W. Africa	3.21	6.92	6.16	-	0.33	21.64	0.92	6.01	2.21	3.24	9.47	12.15	1.31	2.03	5.81	-	-	28	5	14
Total E.E.C.	32.2	19.7	15.00	36.00	17.00	25.00	36.00	13.00	26.00	26.00	32.00	106.00	45.00	43.00	40.00	-	-	1000	100	100
World	40.0	22.00	36.00	15.00	26.00	31.00	11.00	32.00	35.00	40.00	54.00	176.00	60.00	49.00	100.00	-	-	1000	100	100
E.E.C./World	80.0	48.0	40.0	17.0	61.0	71.0	33.0	41.0	72.0	65.0	94.0	66.0	40.0	88.0	40.0	-	-	1000	100	100

Source: IMF Direction of Trade 1968-1972

TABLE 3

1972 MATRIX OF WEST AFRICAN TRADE (in million US dollars)

Importing Countries	Dahomey	Gambia	Ghana	Guinea B.	Guinea R.	Ivory Coast	Liberia	Mali	Mauritania	Niger	Nigeria	Senegal	Sierra Leone	Togo	Upper Volta	Total W. Africa	Total L.D.C.	World	% W.A./World	% E.L.C./World
Dahomey	-	-	0.118	-	-	-	0.008	-	-	0.330	0.389	1.54	-	0.717	-	3.13	28.94	36.84	9	11
Gambia	-	-	0.309	-	-	-	0.138	-	-	0.008	0.009	0.007	0.004	0.023	-	0.23	18.29	19.02	1	9
Ghana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.724	-	-	3.623	-	9.9	17.636	48.137	2	12
Guinea B.	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.112	-	-	-	0.003	10.411	0.33	-	-	0.22	6.42	38.232	1	11
Guinea R.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.003	0.003	-	-	0.003	0.003	0.003	1	11
Ivory Coast	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11
Liberia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11
Mali	-	-	2.763	-	-	-	0.077	-	-	0.021	-	1.572	1.173	-	-	2.48	4.3	28.302	25	61
Mauritania	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.000	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11
Niger	-	-	1.332	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11
Nigeria	-	-	30.85	-	-	-	0.352	-	-	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11
Senegal	-	-	0.422	-	-	-	14.21	-	-	0.12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11
Sierra Leone	-	-	0.558	-	-	-	16.928	-	-	0.004	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11
Togo	-	-	0.047	-	-	-	1.011	-	-	0.006	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11
Upper Volta	-	-	0.387	-	-	-	0.402	-	-	0.003	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11
Total W. Africa	-	-	1.417	-	-	-	6.659	-	-	0.683	-	0.023	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total L.D.C.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
World	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
% W.A./World	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
% E.L.C./World	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source:

IMF Direction of Trade 1968-1972



TABLE 4

UN INVOLVEMENT IN THE WEST AFRICAN SUB-REGION  
SOME RELEVANT UNDP INTERCOUNTRY PROJECTS IN WEST AFRICA, 1972-1976

Name of Project	Countries Covered	Executing Agency
Flood Control and Warning System on the River Niger Basin (Phase 2)	Guinea, Mali, Niger	WMO
Hydrological Forecasting System for the Middle and Lower Basins of the Niger River	Benin, Cameroun, Mali, Niger, Upper Volta	WMO
Program for the Strengthening of Agrometeorological and Hydrological Services of the Sahelian Countries : Training Center for Agrometeorology and Applied Ayrology.	Chad, The Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Upper Volta	WMO
Onchocerciasis Control Program in the Volta River Basin Area: Applied Research (Epidemiology and Chemotherapy) and Training	Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Togo, Upper Volta	WHO
Onchocerciasis Control in the Volta River Basin.	Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Togo, Upper Volta.	WHO
Applied Research on Trypanosomiasis Epidemiology and Control.	Ivory Coast, Niger, Nigeria, Upper Volta.	WHO
Regional Center for Postal Training, Abidjan	Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Upper Volta, Togo	UPU
Documentation Center for the Niger Basin.	Cameroun, Chad, Benin, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Upper Volta.	UNESCO
Telecommunications Network Adviser (W.Africa)	West African Subregion	ITU
Multinational School for Medium-level Telecommunications Personnel, Rufisque	Benin, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Upper Volta	ITU
Telecommunications Link between The Gambia and Senegal	The Gambia, Senegal	ITU
Hydroagricultural Survey of the Senegal River Basin (OMVS)	Mali, Mauritania, Senegal	FAO

TABLE 1 cont.

Name of Project	Countries Covered	Executing Agency
Water Resources in the Lake Chad Basin (LCBC)	Cameroun, Chad, Niger, Nigeria,	FAO
Agricultural Research and its Application in the Senegal River Basin (OMVS)	Mali, Mauritania, Senegal.	FAO
Documentation Center for OMVS	Mali, Mauritania, Senegal.	FAO
Livestock Development in Assale-Servewel (LCBC)	Cameroun, Chad, Niger, Nigeria	FAO
Four Agricultural Centers in the Lake Chad Basin	Cameroun, Chad, Niger, Nigeria	FAO
Development of the Fisheries in Lake Chad	Cameroun, Chad, Niger, Nigeria	FAO
Research on Desert Locust (OCLALAV)	Benin, Cameroun, Chad, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Upper Volta.	FAO
Control of Grain-eating Birds (Phase 2)	Benin, Cameroun, Chad, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Upper Volta.	FAO
Agricultural Development in the Senegal River Basin (Phase 2) (OMVS)	Mali, Mauritania, Senegal	FAO
Hydraulic Development of Pastoral Areas (LCBC)	Cameroun, Chad, Nigeria, Niger	FAO
Creation of Four Forestry Centers Around Lake Chad (LCBC)	Cameroun, Chad, Nigeria, Niger	FAO
Implementation of Water Drilling Program in the Lake Chad Basin (LCBC)	Cameroun, Chad, Nigeria, Niger	FAO
Applied Research on Tsetse Control in Dry Savanna Zones.	Ivory Coast, Niger, Nigeria, Upper Volta	FAO
Study of the Mano River Basin : Land Resources Survey (Liberian Portion)	Liberia, Sierra Leone	FAO

TABLE 4 cont.

Name of Project	Countries Covered	Executing Agency
West Africa Rice Development Association (Phases 1 and 2)	Benin, The Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Upper Volta.	FAO
West African Clearing House Agreement	Benin, Cameroun, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Upper Volta.	ECA/UNCTAD
Updating of Prefeasibility Studies of the Mono River	Benin, Togo.	UNDP
Indicative Development Plan for Niger River.	Benin, Cameroun, Chad, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Upper Volta.	ECA
Niamey UNDAT	Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Niger, Nigeria, Togo, Upper Volta	ECA
Assistance to Banque ouest-Africaine de developpement	Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Niger, Nigeria, Togo, Upper Volta.	ECA

Source: John P. Renninger, Multinational Cooperation for Development in West Africa.

Compiled from "UNDP Regional Programme for Africa 1972-1976", The Projects listed in this table are illustrative rather than exhaustive.

TABLE 5

## MEMBERSHIP OF MAIN WEST AFRICAN GROUPINGS

Organisation/ Grouping	Economic Community of West African States	Communauté Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest	Conseil de l'Entente	Union Monétaire Ouest Africaine	Organization pour la Mise-en- Valeur du Fleuve Senegal	Lake Chad Basin Commission	Niger River Commission	Mano River Union	Nigeria and the World
<b>Country</b>									
* Cameroun									
* Chad	X		X	X		X	X		
Guinea (Benin)	X								
The Gambia	X								
Ghana	X								
Guinea	X								
Guinea Bissau	X								
Ivory Coast	X	X	X	X			X		
Liberia	X								
Mali	X	X			X				
Mauritania	X	X			X				
Niger	X	X	X	X		X	X		
Nigeria	X								
Senegal	X	X		X	X				
Sierra Leone	X							X	
Togo	X		X	X					
Upper Volta	X	X	X	X					
Cape Verde	X		X	X				X	

Source:

The Times, London, 30 June 1975.

Updated by Autho, 1982

Note:

\* Non ECOWAS countries.

Name of Country/ Page	Ratio %	CONTRIBUTIONS		Total Contributions	Payment/Payments		Balance Due/Solde Du		Total Due
		Capital	Budget		1977	Budget	1977	Budget	
1. BURUNDI	3.0	1.500.001	26.150	33.011	1.559.162	1.500.001	26.150	-	-
2. CAMBODIA	2.6	1.300.000	22.864	28.610	1.351.274	-	-	-	-
3. GAMBIA	12.9	6.449.979	112.443	141.949	6.704.371	1.000.000	112.443	-	1.300.000
4. GUINEA (C)	2.9	1.450.097	25.278	31.911	1.507.286	1.450.097	25.278	-	5.449.979
5. GUINEA (B)	1.5	750.00	13.075	16.506	779.581	750.000	13.075	-	-
6. HAITI (G) (T)	13.0	6.499.978	113.315	143.049	6.756.342	6.241.740	113.315	143.049	258.238
7. LAOS	6.7	3.350.000	58.401	73.725	3.482.126	1.067.874	58.401	73.725	2.282.126
8. MALI	1.9	950.000	16.561	20.907	987.468	-	-	-	950.000
9. MARIQUANTA	3.6	1.800.000	31.380	39.614	1.870.994	-	-	-	1.800.000
10. NIGER	2.1	1.050.000	18.304	23.108	1.091.412	1.050.000	18.304	23.108	-
11. NICARAGUA	32.8	16.399.945	285.903	360.924	17.046.772	12.477.637	285.903	181.045	3.922.308
12. PANAMA	5.4	2.700.000	47.069	59.420	2.806.489	1.307.586	47.069	59.420	1.392.414
13. SENEGAL	4.4	2.200.000	38.353	48.417	2.286.770	2.200.000	38.353	48.417	-
14. SIERRA LEONE	3.6	1.800.000	31.380	39.614	1.870.994	1.800.000	31.380	39.614	-
15. SURINAM	2.6	1.300.000	22.664	28.610	1.351.274	250.796	22.664	28.610	1.049.204
16. VENEZUELA	1.0	500.000	8.717	11.003	519.720	250.000	8.717	-	250.000
TOTAL	100.0	50.000.000	871.657	1.100.378	51.972.035	31.345.731	832.432	666.701.	18.654.269
						39.225	400.666		19.094.166

TABLE 7

SECRETARIAT

1977 BUDGETARY CONTRIBUTION POSITION AS AT  
30.9.77L'ETAT DES CONTRIBUTIONS BUDGETAIRES A LA  
DATE DU 30.9.77

Name of Country Pays	Ratio Proportion	Contribution UA		Payment Paiement	Balance Due Solde Du \$
	%				
1. BENIN	2.9	104,194	89,900	-	104,194
2. GAMBIA	2.5	90,081	77,500	90,081	-
3. GHANA	12.5	450,407	387,500	450,407	-
4. GUINEA	2.8	100,891	86,800	100,891	-
5. GUINEA BISSAU	1.51	54,409	46,810	-	54,409
6. IVORY COAST	12.6	454,010	390,600	454,010	-
7. LIBERIA	6.5	234,212	201,500	234,212	-
8. MALI	1.9	68,462	58,900	-	68,462
9. MAURITANIA	3.5	126,114	108,500	112,445	13,669
10. NIGER	2.0	72,065	62,000	72,065	-
11. NIGERIA	31.9	1,149,438	988,900	1,149,438	-
12. SENEGAL	5.3	190,972	164,300	-	190,972
13. SIERRA LEONE	4.3	154,940	133,300	-	154,940
14. TOGO	3.5	126,114	108,500	126,114	-
15. UPPER VOLTA	2.5	90,081	77,500	-	90,081
16. CAPE VERDE	-	-	-	-	-
17. SUSPENSE	3.79	136,563	117,490	-	136,563
		3,602,933	3,100,000	2,789,663	813,290

TABLE 8

SECRETARIAT

1978 BUDGETARY CONTRIBUTION POSITION  
AS AT 30.9.78

L'ETAT DES CONTRIBUTIONS BUDGETAIRES A LA  
DATE DU 30.9.78

Name of Country Pays	Proportion %	Contribution U.A.		Payment Paiement	Balance Due Solde Du \$
1. BENIN	3.03	65,661	54,718	-	65,661
2. GAMBIA	2.63	56,992	47,494	56,992	-
3. GHANA	13.03	282,364	235,304	-	282,364
4. GUINEA	2.93	63,494	52,912	-	63,494
5. GUINEA BISSAU	1.51	32,722	27,269	16,449	16,273
6. IVORY COAST	13.13	284,532	237,110	314,875	-
7. LIBERIA	6.77	146,708	122,576	-	146,708
8. MALI	1.92	41,607	34,673	-	41,607
9. MAURITANIA	3.64	78,879	65,733	-	78,879
10. NIGER	2.12	45,940	38,284	-	45,940
11. NIGERIA	33.13	717,939	598,283	848,517	-
12. SENEGAL	5.45	118,104	98,420	-	118,104
13. SIERRA LEONE	4.44	96,216	80,180	-	96,216
14. TOGO	3.64	78,879	65,733	169,543	-
15. UPPER VOLTA	2.63	56,992	47,494	-	56,992
16. CAPE VERDE	-	-	-	-	-
		2,167,029	1,806,183	1,406,376	1,012,238

CREDITORS TO BE CARRIED FORWARD TO 1979  
CREANCIERS REPORTEES A 1979

NIGERIA	\$130,578
TOGO	\$ 90,664
IVORY COAST	\$ 30,343
GAMBIA	\$ 13,917
	<u>\$265,502</u>

TABLE 9

IMPORT DUTIES AS PROPORTION OF REVENUE FOR ECOWAS  
COUNTRIES

(Selected Years)

Country	Year	Import Duties as % of Revenues	Remarks
1. Dahomey (Benin) (cc)	1971	55.0%	
2. The Gambia (cc)	1973	35.0%	
3. Ghana (cc)	1973	10.4% *	*The poor economic state of the country does not allow or encourage imports into the country by both Ghana itself & exporting countries. Ivory Coast allows capital goods importation at a low duty to encourage industrialisation.
4. Ivory Coast (cc)	1973	19.4%	
5. Liberia (cc)	1973	18.9%	
6. Mauritania (cc)	1973	26.7%	
7. Niger (LLC)	1973	10.5% **	** Monrovia is a Free port and imports to Liberia are generally low.
8. Nigeria (cc)	1973	18.3%	
9. Senegal (cc)	1968	43.4%	** The reason for this is - (1) Duty free importation, esp. of capital goods to encourage industrialisation and business (2) Excessive smuggling of goods from their over 2,000 mile borders. Nigeria had a low rate of import duties on capital goods to encourage industrialisation. She also cut down on heavy goods & encouraged local production.
10. Sierra Leone (cc)	1973	30.9%	
11. Togo (cc)	1973	19.9% ***	
12. Upper Volta	1973	45.0%	
13. Guinea (C) (cc)	Not Available		
14. Guinea (B) (cc)			
15. Mali (LLC)			
16. Cape Verde (cc)			
			*** Togo's Port, Lome, is a Free port, import duties are low and this encouraged the great use of the port from various West African countries.

Source: African Statistical Year Book, Part 2, West Africa  
(New York : UN, 1975). Amended by the Author.

NB. LLC = Land Locked Countries.  
cc = Coastal Countries.



TABLE 10

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS OF SELECTED WEST AFRICAN  
COUNTRIES

DAHOMEY (BENIN)	Palm products, cotton, fish.
IVORY COAST	Coffee, cocoa, timber, bananas
THE GAMBIA	Groundnuts.
GHANA	Gold, diamonds, timber, aluminium, cocoa.
MALI	Rice, cotton, groundnuts, livestock, fish.
MAURITANIA	Iron ore, copper, gum, gum arabic, fish.
NIGER	Groundnuts, livestock, uranium.
NIGERIA	Crude petroleum, tin, ground nuts, palm products, rubber, cocoa, cotton, timber.
SENEGAL	Groundnuts, phosphate, fish, manufactures.
SIERRA LEONE	Diamonds, iron ore, bauxite, palm kernels, coffee, cocoa, ginger, kolanuts.
TOGO	Phosphate, cocoa, coffee.
UPPER VOLTA	Livestock, cotton, groundnuts.

Source: Central Bank of Nigeria, Economic and Financial Review, 10, 1 (June 1972).

J.P. Renninger, Multinational Cooperation for Development in West Africa.

ANNEX 1TREATY OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS)PREAMBLE

The President of the Republic, Head of State, Head of the Revolutionary Military Government, and President of the National Council of the Revolution of Dahomey.

The President of the Republic of Gambia.

The Head of State and Chairman of the National Redemption Council of the Republic of Ghana.

The Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the People's Revolutionary Armed Forces, President of the Republic of Guinea.

The President of the Republic of Guinea Bissau

The President of the Republic of Ivory Coast.

The President of the Republic of Liberia.

The Chairman of the Military Committee of National Liberation, President of the Republic of Mali.

The President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

The Head of State and President of the Supreme Military Council of the Republic of Niger.

The Head of the Federal Military Government, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The President of the Republic of Senegal.

The President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

The President of the Togolese Republic.

The President of the Republic of Upper Volta.

CONSCIOUS of the overriding need to accelerate, foster and encourage the economic and social development of their states in order to improve the living standards of their peoples,

CONVINCED that the promotion of harmonious economic development of their states calls for effective economic co-operation largely through a determined and concerted policy of self-reliance.

RECOGNISING that progress towards sub-regional economic integration requires an assessment of the economic potential and interests of each state;

ACCEPTING the need for a fair and equitable distribution of the benefits of co-operation among Member States;

NOTING that forms of bilateral and multilateral economic co-operation existing in the sub-region give hope for wider co-operation;

RECALLING the Declaration of African Co-operation, Development and Economic Independence adopted by the Tenth Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African Unity;

BEARING IN MIND that efforts at sub-regional co-operation should not conflict with or hamper similar efforts being made to foster wide co-operation in Africa;

AFFIRMING as the ultimate objective of their efforts accelerated and sustained economic development of their states and the creation of a homogeneous society, leading to the unity of the countries of West Africa, by the elimination of all types of obstacles to the free movement of goods, capital and persons;

DECIDE for the purpose of the foregoing to create an Economic Community of West African States, and AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

## CHAPTER 1

### PRINCIPLES

#### ARTICLE 1

##### Establishment and Membership of the Community

1. By this Treaty the HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES established among themselves an Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), hereinafter referred to as "the Community".
2. The members of the Community, hereinafter referred to as "the Member States", shall be the States that ratify this Treaty and such other West African States as may accede to it.

#### ARTICLE 2

##### Aims of the Community

1. It shall be the aim of the Community to promote co-operation and development in all fields of economic activity particularly in the fields of industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions and in social and cultural matters for the purpose of raising the standard of living of its peoples, of increasing and maintaining economic stability, of fostering closer relations among its members and of contributing to the progress and development of the African continent.
2. For the purposes set out in the preceding paragraph and as hereinafter provided for in this Treaty, the Community shall by stages ensure:
  - (a) the elimination as between the Member States of customs duties and other charges of equivalent effect in respect of the importation and exportation of goods;

- (b) the abolition of quantitative and administrative restrictions on trade among the Member States;
- (c) the establishment of a common customs tariff and a common commercial policy towards third countries;
- (d) the abolition as between the Member States of the obstacles to the free movement of persons, services and capital;
- (e) the harmonisation of the agricultural policies and the promotion of common projects in the Member States notably in the fields of marketing, research and agro-industrial enterprises;
- (f) the implementation of schemes for the joint development of transport, communication, energy and other infrastructural facilities as well as the evolution of a common policy in these fields;
- (g) the harmonisation of the economic and industrial policies of the Member States and the elimination of disparities in the level of development of Member States;
- (h) the harmonisation, required for the proper functioning of the Community, of the monetary policies of the Member States;
- (i) the establishment of a Fund for Co-operation, Compensation and Development, and
- (j) such other activities calculated to further the aims of the Community as the Member States may from time to time undertake in common.

### ARTICLE 3

#### General Undertaking

The Member States shall make every effort to plan and direct their policies with a view to creating favourable conditions for the achievement of the aims of the Community; in particular, each Member State shall take all steps to secure the enactment of such legislation as is necessary to give effect to this Treaty.

CHAPTER IIINSTITUTIONS OF THE COMMUNITYARTICLE 4Institutions

1. The institutions of the Community shall be:

- (a) the Authority of Heads of State and Government;
- (b) the Council of Ministers;
- (c) the Executive Secretariat;
- (d) the Tribunal of the Community; and
- (e) the following Technical and Specialised Commissions:
  - the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission;
  - the Industry, Agriculture and Natural Resources Commission;
  - the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Commission;
  - the Social and Cultural Affairs Commission;

and such other Commissions or bodies as may be established by the Authority of Heads of State and Government or are established or provided for by this Treaty.

2. The institutions of the Community shall perform the functions and act within the limits of the powers conferred upon them by or under this Treaty and by Protocols thereto.

ARTICLE 5Authority of Heads of State and GovernmentEstablishment, Composition and Functions

1. There is hereby established the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Member States referred to in this Treaty as "the Authority" which shall be the principal governing institution of the Community.
2. The Authority shall be responsible for, and have the general direction and control of the performance of the executive functions of the Community for the progressive development of the Community and the achievement of its aims.
3. The decisions and directions of the Authority shall be binding on all institutions of the Community.

4. The Authority shall meet at least once a year. It shall determine its own procedure including that for convening its meetings, for the conduct of business thereat and at other times, and for the annual rotation of the office of Chairman among the members of the Authority.

## ARTICLE 6

### Council of Ministers

#### Establishment, Composition and Functions

1. There is hereby established a Council of Ministers which shall consist of two representatives of each Member State.

2. It shall be the responsibility of the Council of Ministers:

- (a) to keep under review the functioning and development of the Community in accordance with this Treaty;
- (b) to make recommendations to the Authority on matters of policy aimed at the efficient and harmonious functioning and development of the Community;
- (c) to give directions to all subordinate institutions of the Community; and
- (d) to exercise such other powers conferred on it and perform such other duties assigned to it by this Treaty.

3. The decisions and directions of the Council of Ministers shall be binding on all subordinate institutions of the Community unless otherwise determined by the Authority.

4. The Council of Ministers shall meet twice a year and one of such meetings shall be held immediately preceding the annual meeting of the Authority. Extraordinary meetings of the Council of Ministers may be convened as and when necessary.

5. Subject to any directions that the Authority may give, the Council of Ministers shall determine its own procedure including that for convening its meetings, for the conduct of business thereat and at other times, and for the annual rotation of the office of Chairman among the members of the Council of Ministers.

6. Where an objection is recorded on behalf of a Member State to a proposal submitted for the decision of the Council of Ministers, the proposal shall, unless such objection is withdrawn, be referred to the Authority for its decision.

## ARTICLE 7

### Decisions of the Authority and the Council of Ministers

The Authority shall determine the procedure for the dissemination of its decisions and directions and those of the Council of Ministers and for matters relating to their coming into effect.

ARTICLE 8The Executive Secretariat

1. There shall be established an Executive Secretariat of the Community.
2. The Executive Secretariat shall be headed by an Executive Secretary who shall be appointed by the Authority to serve in such office for a term of four (4) years and be eligible for reappointment for another term of four (4) years only.
3. The Executive Secretary shall only be removed from office by the Authority upon the recommendation of the Council of Ministers.
4. The Executive Secretary shall be the principal executive officer of the Community. He shall be assisted by two Deputy Executive Secretaries who shall be appointed by the Council of Ministers.
6. The terms and conditions of service of the Executive Secretary and other officers of the Executive Secretariat shall be governed by regulations that may be made by the Council of Ministers.
7. In appointing officers to offices in the Executive Secretariat due regard shall be had, subject to the paramount importance of securing the highest standards of efficiency and technical competence, to the desirability of maintaining an equitable distribution of appointments to such posts among citizens of the Member States.
8. The Executive Secretary and officers of the Executive Secretariat, in the discharge of their duties, owe their loyalty entirely to the Community.
9. The Executive Secretary shall be responsible for the day to day administration of the Community and all its institutions.
10. The Executive Secretary shall:
  - (a) as appropriate, service and assist the institutions of the Community in the performance of their functions;
  - (b) keep the functioning of the Community under continuous examination and, where appropriate, report the results of its examination to the Council of Ministers;
  - (c) submit a report of activities to all sessions of the Council of Ministers and all meetings of the Authority; and
  - (d) undertake such work and studies and perform such services relating to the aims of the Community as may be assigned to him by the Council of Ministers and also make such proposals thereto as may assist in the efficient and harmonious functioning and development of the Community.

ARTICLE 9Technical and Specialised CommissionsEstablishment, Composition and Functions

1. There shall be established the following Commissions:
  - (a) the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission;
  - (b) the Industry, Agriculture and Natural Resources Commission;
  - (c) the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Commission; and
  - (d) the Social and Cultural Affairs Commission.
2. The Authority may from time to time establish other Commissions as it deems necessary.
3. Each Commission shall consist of representatives designated one each by the Member States. Such representatives may be assisted by advisers.
4. Each Commission shall:
  - (a) submit from time to time reports and recommendations through the Executive Secretary to the Council of Ministers either on its own initiative or upon the request of the Council of Ministers of the Executive Secretary; and
  - (b) have such other functions as are imposed on it under this Treaty.
5. Subject to any directions which may be given by the Council of Ministers, each Commission shall meet as often as necessary for the proper discharge of its functions and shall determine its own procedure, including that for convening its meetings and the conduct of business thereat and at other times.

ARTICLE 10External Auditor

1. There shall be an External Auditor of the Community who shall be appointed and removed by the Authority on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers.
2. Subject to the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the Council of Ministers shall make regulations governing the terms and conditions of service and powers of the External Auditor.

ARTICLE 11Tribunal of the Community

1. There shall be established a Tribunal of the Community which shall ensure the observance of law and justice in the interpretation of the provisions of this Treaty. Furthermore, it shall be charged with the responsibility of sealing such disputes as may be referred to it in accordance with Article 56 of this Treaty.
2. The composition, competence, statutes and other matters relating to the tribunal shall be prescribed by the Authority.



CHAPTER IIICUSTOMS AND TRADE MATTERSARTICLE 12Liberalization of Trade

There shall be progressively established in the course of a transitional period of fifteen (15) years from the definitive entry into force of this Treaty, and as prescribed in this Chapter, a Customs Union among the Member States. Within this Union, customs duties or other charges with equivalent effect on imports shall be eliminated. Quota, quantitative or like restrictions or prohibitions and administrative obstacles to trade among the Member States shall also be removed. Furthermore, a common customs tariff in respect of all goods imported into the Member States from third countries shall be established and maintained.

ARTICLE 13Customs Duties

1. Member States shall reduce and ultimately eliminate customs duties and any other charges with equivalent effect except duties notified in accordance with Article 17 and other charges which fall within that Article, imposed on or in connection with the importation of goods which are eligible for Community tariff treatment in accordance with Article 15 of this Treaty. Any such duties or other charges are hereinafter referred to as "import duties".
2. Within a period of two (2) years from the definitive entry into force of this Treaty, a Member State may not be required to reduce or eliminate import duties. During this two-year period, Member States shall not impose any new duties and taxes or increase existing ones and shall transmit to the Executive Secretariat all information on import duties for study by the relevant institutions of the Community.
3. Upon the expiry of the period of two (2) years referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article and during the next succeeding eight (8) years, Member States shall progressively reduce and ultimately eliminate import duties in accordance with a schedule to be recommended to the Council of Ministers by the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission. Such a schedule shall take into account, inter alia, the effects of the reduction and elimination of import duties on the revenue of Member States and the need to avoid the disruption of the income they derive from import duties.
4. The Authority may at any time, on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers, decide that any import duties shall be reduced more rapidly or eliminated earlier than is recommended by the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission. However, the Council of Ministers shall, not later than one calendar year preceding the date in which such reduction or eliminations come into effect, examine whether such reductions or eliminations shall apply to some or all goods and in respect of some or all the Member States and shall report the result of such examination for the decision of the Authority.

ARTICLE 14Common Customs Tariff

1. The Member States agree to the gradual establishment of a common customs tariff in respect of all goods imported into the Member States from third countries.
2. At the end of the period of eight (8) years referred to in paragraph 3 of Article 13 of this Treaty and during the next succeeding five (5) years, Member States shall gradually, in accordance with a schedule to be recommended by the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission, abolish existing differences in their external customs tariffs.
3. In the course of the same period, the above-mentioned Commission shall ensure the establishment of a common customs nomenclature and customs statistical nomenclature for all the Member States.

ARTICLE 15Community Tariff Treatment

1. For the purposes of this Treaty, goods shall be accepted as eligible for Community tariff treatment if they have been consigned to the territory of the importing Member State from the territory of another Member State and originate in the Member States.
2. The definition of products originating from Member States shall be the subject of a protocol to be annexed to this Treaty.
3. The Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission shall from time to time examine whether the rules referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article can be amended to make them simpler and more liberal. In order to ensure their smooth and equitable operation, the Council of Ministers may from time to time amend them.

ARTICLE 16Deflection of Trade

1. For the purposes of this Article, trade is said to be deflected if,
  - (a) imports of any particular product by a Member State from another Member State increase,
    - (i) as a result of the reduction or elimination of duties and charges on that product, and
    - (ii) because duties and charges levied by the exporting Member States on imports of raw materials used for manufacture of the product in question are lower than the corresponding duties and charges levied by the importing Member State; and
  - (b) this increase in imports causes or would cause serious injury to production which is carried on in the territory of the importing Member State.

2. The Council of Ministers shall keep under review the question of deflection of trade and its causes. It shall take such decisions, as are necessary, in order to deal with the causes of this deflection.

3. In case of deflection of trade to the detriment of a Member State resulting from the abusive reduction or elimination of duties and charges levied by another Member State, the Council of Ministers shall study the question in order to arrive at a just solution.

#### ARTICLE 17

##### Revenue Duties and Internal Taxation

1. Member States shall not apply directly or indirectly to imported goods from any Member State fiscal charges in excess of those applied to like domestic goods or otherwise impose such charges for the effective protection of domestic goods.

2. Member States shall eliminate all effective internal taxes or other internal charges that are made for the protection of domestic goods not later than one (1) year after the period of two (2) years referred to in paragraph 2 of Article 13 of this Treaty. Where by virtue of obligations under an existing contract entered into by a Member State and such a Member State is unable to comply with the provisions of this Article, the Member State shall duly notify the Council of Ministers of this fact and shall not extend or renew such contract at its expiry.

3. Member States shall eliminate progressively all revenue duties designed to protect domestic goods not later than the end of the period of eight (8) years referred to in paragraph 3 of Article 13 of this Treaty.

4. Each Member State shall, not later than the end of the period of two (2) years referred to in paragraph 2 of Article 13 of this Treaty, notify the Council of Ministers of any duty it wishes to apply under the provisions of paragraph 3 of the aforementioned Article.

#### ARTICLE 18

##### Quantitative Restrictions on Community Goods

1. Except as may be provided for or permitted by this Treaty, each of the Member States undertakes to relax gradually and to remove ultimately in accordance with a schedule to be recommended by the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission and not later than ten (10) years from the definitive entry into force of this Treaty, all the then existing quota, quantitative or like restrictions or prohibitions which apply to the import into that State of goods originating in the other Member States and thereafter refrain from imposing any further restrictions or prohibitions.

2. The Authority may at any time, on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers, decide that any quota, quantitative or like restrictions or prohibitions shall be relaxed more rapidly or removed earlier than is recommended by the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission.

3. A Member State may, after having given notice to the other Member States of its intention to do so, introduce or continue or execute restrictions or prohibitions affecting:

- (a) the application of security laws and regulations;
- (b) the control of arms, ammunition and other war equipment and military items;
- (c) the protection of human, animal or plant health or life, or the protection of public morality;
- (d) the transfer of gold, silver and precious and semi-precious stones; or
- (e) the protection of national treasures;  
provided that a Member State shall not so exercise the right to introduce or continue to execute the restrictions or prohibitions conferred by this paragraph as to stultify the free movement of goods envisaged in this Article.

#### ARTICLE 19

##### Dumping

1. Member States undertake to prohibit the practice of dumping goods within the Community.

2. For the purposes of this Article, "dumping" means the transfer of goods originating in a Member State to another Member State for sale:

- (a) at a price lower than the comparable price charged for similar goods in the Member States where such goods originate (due allowance being made for the differences in the conditions of sale or in taxation or for any other factors affecting the comparability of prices); and
- (b) under circumstances likely to prejudice the production of similar goods in that Member State.

#### ARTICLE 20

##### Most Favoured Nation Treatment

1. Member States shall accord to one another in relation to trade between them the most favoured nation treatment and in no case shall tariff concessions granted to a third country under an agreement with a Member State be more favourable than those applicable under this Treaty.

2. Copies of such agreements referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be transmitted by the Member States which are parties to them, to Executive Secretariat of the Community.

3. Any agreement between a Member State and a third country under which tariff concessions are granted, shall not derogate from the obligations of that Member State under this Treaty.

ARTICLE 21Internal Legislation

Member States shall refrain from enacting legislation which directly or indirectly discriminates against the same or like products of another Member State.

ARTICLE 22Re-exportation of Goods and Transit Facilities

1. Where customs duty has been charged and collected on any goods imported from a third country into a Member State such goods shall not be re-exported into another Member State except as may be permitted under a Protocol to this Treaty entered into by the Member States.
2. Where goods are re-exported under such a Protocol, the Member States from whose territory such goods are re-exported shall refund to the Member State into whose territory such goods are imported the customs duties charged and collected on such goods. The duties so refunded shall not exceed those applicable on such goods in the territory of the Member State into which such goods are imported.
3. Each Member State, in accordance with international regulations, shall grant full and unrestricted freedom of transit through its territory of goods proceeding to or from a third country indirectly through that territory to or from other Member States; and such transit shall not be subject to any discrimination, quantitative restrictions, duties or other charges levied on transit.
4. Notwithstanding paragraph 3 of this Article,
  - (a) goods in transit shall be subject to the customs law; and
  - (b) goods in transit shall be liable to the charges usually made for carriage and for any services which may be rendered, provided such charges are not discriminatory.
5. Where goods are imported from a third country into one Member State, each of the other Member States shall be free to restrict the transfer to it of such goods whether by a system of licensing and controlling importers or by other means.
6. The provisions of paragraph 5 of this Article shall apply to goods which, under the provisions of Article 15 of this Treaty, fail to be accepted as originating in a Member State.

ARTICLE 23Customs Administration

Member States shall, upon the advice of the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission, take appropriate measures to harmonise and standardise their customs regulations and procedures to ensure the effective application of the provisions of this chapter and to facilitate the movement of goods and services across their frontiers.

ARTICLE 24Drawback

1. Member States may, at or before the end of the period of eight (8) years referred to in paragraph 3 of Article 13 of this Treaty, refuse to accept as eligible for Community tariff treatment, goods in relation to which drawback is claimed or made use of in connection with their exportation from the Member States in the territory of which the goods have undergone the last process of production.

2. For the purposes of this Article:

- (a) "drawback" means any arrangement, including temporary duty-free admission, for the refund of all or part of the duties applicable to imported raw materials, provided that the arrangement, expressly or in effect, allows such refund or remission if goods are exported but not if they are retained for home use;
- (b) "remission" includes exemption from duties for goods imported into free ports, free zones or other places which have similar customs privileges; and
- (c) "duties" means customs duties and any other charges with equivalent effect imposed on imported goods, except the non-protective element in such duties or charges.

ARTICLE 25Compensation for Loss of Revenue

1. The Council of Ministers shall, on the report of the Executive Secretary and recommendation by the appropriate Commission or Commissions, determine the compensation to be paid to a Member State which has suffered loss of import duties as a result of the application of this Chapter.

2. A protocol to be annexed to this Treaty shall state precisely the methods of assessment of the loss of revenue suffered by Member States as a result of the application of this chapter.

ARTICLE 26Safeguard Clause

1. In the event of serious disturbances occurring in the economy of a Member State following the application of the provisions of this chapter, the Member

State concerned shall after informing the Executive Secretary and the other Member States take the necessary safeguard measures pending the approval of the Council of Ministers.

2. These measures shall remain in force for a maximum period of one year. They may not be extended beyond that period except with the approval of the Council of Ministers.

3. The Council of Ministers shall examine the method of application of these measures while they remain in force.

#### CHAPTER IV

#### FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND RESIDENCE

#### ARTICLE 27

##### Visa and Residence

1. Citizens of Member States shall be regarded as Community citizens and accordingly Member States undertake to abolish all obstacles to their freedom of movement and residence within the Community.

2. Member States shall by agreements with each other exempt Community citizens from holding visitors' visas and residence permits and allow them to work and undertake commercial and industrial activities within their territories.

#### CHAPTER V

#### INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND HARMONIZATION

#### ARTICLE 28

##### General Principles

For the purposes of this chapter, Member States shall achieve their industrial development and harmonization in the three stages as set out in Articles 29, 30 and 31.

#### ARTICLE 29

##### Stage 1: Exchange of Information on Major Industrial Projects

Member States undertake to:

- (a) furnish one another with major feasibility studies and reports on projects within their territories;
- (b) furnish one another, on request, reports, on the performance of prospective technical partners who have developed similar projects in their territories;
- (c) furnish one another, on request, reports on foreign business groups operating in their territories;

- (d) furnish one another, on request, with reports on their experiences on industrial projects and to exchange industrial research information and experts,
- (e) commission, where appropriate, joint studies for the identification of viable industrial projects for development within the Community, and
- (f) finance, where appropriate, joint research on the transfer of technology and the development of new products through the use of raw materials common in some or all of the Member States and on specific industrial problems.

#### ARTICLE 30

##### Stage II : Harmonization of Industrial Incentives and Industrial Development Plans

Member States undertake to:

- (a) harmonize their industrial policies so as to ensure a similarity of industrial climate and to avoid disruption of their industrial activities resulting from dissimilar policies in the fields of industrial incentives, company taxation and Africanisation= and
- (b) co-operation with one another by exchanging their industrial plans so as to avoid unhealthy rivalry and waste of resources.

#### ARTICLE 31

##### Stage III : Personnel Exchange, Training and Joint Ventures

Member States shall:

- (a) exchange, as may be necessary, skilled, profession and managerial personnel in the operation of projects within the Community;
- (b) provide places for training in their educational and technical institutions for Community citizens: and
- (c) engage, where appropriate, in joint development of projects including those which entail the execution of complementary parts of such projects in different Member States.



ARTICLE 32Remedial Measures

1. The Council of Ministers shall keep under constant review in the implementation of the provisions of this Chapter, the disparity in the levels of industrial development of the Member States and may direct the appropriate Commission of the Community to recommend measures to remedy such disparity.
2. In the implementation of the aims of the Community, the Council of Ministers shall recommend measures designed to promote the industrial development of Member States and shall take steps to reduce gradually the Community's economic dependence on the outside world and strengthen economic relations among themselves.
3. The Council of Ministers shall further recommend measures designed to accelerate the industrial integration of the economies of the Member States.

CHAPTER VICO-OPERATION IN AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCESARTICLE 33Co-operation among Member States

Member States shall co-operate as set out in this Chapter in the development of their natural resources particularly agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fisheries.

ARTICLE 34Stage I: Harmonization of Agricultural Policies

1. Member States undertake to work towards the harmonization of their internal and external agricultural policies in their relations with one another=
2. Member States shall exchange regularly information on experiments and results of research being carried out in their respective territories and on existing rural development programmes= and
3. Member States shall formulate, as appropriate, joint programmes for both basic and in-service training in existing institutions.

ARTICLE 35Stage II : Evolution of a Common Agricultural Policy

Member States undertake to take all measures necessary for the creation of a common policy especially in the fields of research, training, production, processing and marketing of the products of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fisheries. For this purpose, the Industry, Agriculture and Natural Resources Commission shall, as soon as possible, after its establishment meet to make recommendations to the Council of Ministers for the harmonization and exploitation of natural resources of the Member States.

CHAPTER VIICO-OPERATION IN MONETARY AND FINANCIAL MATTERSARTICLE 36Co-operation in Monetary and Fiscal Matters

1. It shall be the responsibility of the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission, among other things to:

- (a) as soon as practicable, make recommendations on the harmonisation of the economic and fiscal policies of the Member States;
- (b) give its constant attention to the maintenance of a balance of payments equilibrium in the Member States<sup>7</sup> and
- (c) examine developments of the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission under this Article shall be made to the Council of Ministers.

ARTICLE 37Settlement of Payments Between Member States

The Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission shall make recommendations to the Council of Ministers on the establishment, in the short term, of bilateral systems for the settlement of accounts between the Member States and, in the long term, of a multilateral system for the settlement of such accounts.

ARTICLE 38Committee of West African Central Banks

1. For the purpose of overseeing the system of payments within the Community, there is hereby established a Committee of West African Central Banks, which shall consist of the Governors of the Central Banks of the Member States or such other persons as may be designated by Member States. This Committee shall, subject to this Treaty, determine its own procedures.

2. The Committee of West African Central Banks shall make recommendations to the Council of Ministers from time to time on the operation of the clearing system of payments and on other monetary issues of the Community.

ARTICLE 39Movement of Capital and Capital Issues Committee

1. For the purpose of ensuring the free flow of capital between the Member States consistent with the objectives of this Treaty, there is hereby established a Capital Issues Committee, which shall consist of representatives designated one each by the Member States and shall, subject to this Treaty, determine its own procedure.

2. The Member States, in designating their representatives referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, shall designate persons with financial, commercial, banking or administrative experience or qualifications.

3. In the exercise of its functions under paragraph 1 of this Article, the Capital Issues Committee shall:

- (a) seek to achieve the mobility of capital within the Community through the inter-locking of any capital markets and stock exchanges:
- (b) ensure that stocks and shares floated in the territory of a Member State are quoted on the stock exchanges of the other Member States.
- (c) ensure that nationals of a Member State are given the opportunity of acquiring stocks, shares and other securities or otherwise investing in enterprises in the territories of other Member States:
- (d) establish a machinery for the wide dissemination in the Member States of stock exchange quotations of each Member State:
- (e) organise and arrange the quotation of prices, timing, volume and conditions of issue of securities of new enterprises in the Member States:
- (f) ensure the unimpeded flow of capital within the Community through the removal of controls on the transfer of capital among the Member States in accordance with a time-table, to be determined by the Council of Ministers: and
- (g) seek to harmonise the rates of interest on loans prevailing in the Member States so as to facilitate the investment of capital from a Member State in profitable enterprises elsewhere within the Community.

4. The capital envisaged in the provisions of this Article is that of Member States or their citizens.

5. With regard to capital other than that referred to in paragraph 4 of this Article, the Capital Issues Committee shall determine its movement within the Community.

CHAPTER VIIINFRASTRUCTURAL LINKS IN THE FIELDS OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONSARTICLE 40Common Transport and Communications Policy

Member States undertake to evolve gradually common transport and communications policies through the improvement and expansion of their existing transport and communications links and the establishment of new ones as a means of furthering the physical cohesion of the Member States and the promotion of greater movement of persons, goods and services within the Community.

ARTICLE 41Roads

The Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Commission shall formulate plans for a comprehensive network of all-weather roads within the Community with a view to promoting social and unimpeded commercial intercourse between the Member States through the improvement of existing roads to, and the construction of new ones of international standards. In the formulation of these plans, the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Commission shall give priority to a network of roads traversing the territories of the Member States.

ARTICLE 42Railways

The Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Commission shall for the purpose of connecting the railways of the Member States formulate plans for the improvement and reorganisation of such railways.

ARTICLE 43Shipping and International Waterways

1. The Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Commission shall formulate plans for the harmonisation and rationalisation of policies on shipping and international waterways of the Member States.
2. Member States undertake to do their utmost to form multinational shipping Companies for both maritime and river navigation.

ARTICLE 44Air Transport

Member States shall use their best endeavour to bring about the merger of their national airlines in order to promote efficiency and profitability in the air transportation of passengers and goods within the Community by aircraft owned by the Governments of the Member States and/or their citizens. To this end, they shall co-ordinate the training of their nationals and policies in air transport and standardize their equipment.

ARTICLE 45Telecommunications

1. Member States shall reorganise and improve, where necessary, their national telecommunications network to meet standards required for international traffic.
2. Member States undertake to establish a direct, modern, efficient and rational system of telecommunications among themselves.

ARTICLE 46Pan-African Telecommunications Network

The Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Commission shall make urgent recommendations for the rapid realisation in the West African Section of the Pan-African Telecommunications network and, in particular, the establishment of links necessary for the economic and social development of the Community. Member States shall co-ordinate their efforts in this field and in the mobilisation of national and international financial resources.

ARTICLE 47Postal Services

1. The Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Commission shall study and make recommendations to the Council of Ministers on proposals for speedier, cheaper and more frequent postal services within the Community.
2. Member States undertake to:
  - (a) promote close collaboration among their postal administrations;
  - (b) harmonise routes of mails; and
  - (c) establish among themselves a system of postal remittances and preferential tariffs which are more favourable than those envisaged by the Universal Postal Union.

CHAPTER IXENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCESARTICLE 48Co-operation in Energy and Mineral Resources

1. The Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Commission shall engage in consultations on, and the co-ordination of the policies and activities of the Member States in the field of energy and submit its recommendations to the Council of Ministers.

2. Member States undertake to:

- (a) co-operate, consult on and co-ordinate their policies, regarding energy and mineral resources:
- (b) harmonise their energy and mineral resources policies especially as regards the production and distribution of energy, research, production and processing of mineral resources:
- (c) exchange information on the results of research being carried out:
- (d) plan joint programmes for training technicians and personnel: and
- (e) formulate a common energy and mineral policy especially in the fields of production, distribution of energy, research, production and processing of mineral resources.

CHAPTER X

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL MATTERS

ARTICLE 49

Co-operation in Social and Cultural Matters

Subject to any directions that may be given by the Council of Ministers, the Social and Cultural Affairs Commission shall examine ways of increasing exchange of social and cultural activities among the Member States and of developing them, provide a forum for consultation generally on social and cultural matters affecting the Member States and make recommendations to the Council of Ministers.

CHAPTER XI

FUND FOR CO-OPERATION, COMPENSATION AND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 50

Establishment

There is hereby established a Fund to be known as the Fund for Co-operation, Compensation and Development hereinafter referred to as "the Fund".

ARTICLE 51Resources of the Fund

1. The Fund shall derive its resources from:

- (a) contributions of Member States;
- (b) income from Community enterprises;
- (c) receipts from bilateral and multilateral sources as well as other foreign sources; and
- (d) subsidies and contributions of all kinds and from all sources.

2. The contributions of Member States referred to in sub-paragraph (a) of the preceding paragraph shall be determined by the Council of Ministers and shall be of such minimum and maximum amounts as the Council of Ministers may determine.

3. The method of determining the contribution to be paid by Member States, the regulations governing the payment and the currencies in which they shall be effected, the operation, organisation, management, status of the funds and matters related and incidental thereto shall be the subject of a protocol to be annexed to this Treaty.

ARTICLE 52Uses of the Fund

The Fund shall be used to:

- (a) finance projects in Member States.
- (b) provide compensation to Member States which have suffered losses as a result of the location of Community enterprises,
- (c) provide compensation and other forms of assistance to Member States which have suffered losses arising out of the application of the provisions of this Treaty on the liberalisation of Trade within the Community.
- (d) guarantee foreign investments made in Member States in respect of enterprises established in pursuance of the provisions of this Treaty ~~on the~~ harmonisation of industrial policies;
- (e) provide appropriate means to facilitate the sustained mobilisation of internal and external financial resources for the Member States and the Community, and
- (f) promote development projects in the less developed Member States of the Community.

CHAPTER XIIFINANCIAL PROVISIONSARTICLE 53Budget of the Community

1. There shall be established a Budget of the Community.
2. All expenditures of the Community, other than those in respect of the Fund for Co-operation, Compensation and Development, established under Chapter XI of this Treaty, shall be approved in respect of each financial year by the Council of Ministers and shall be chargeable to the budget.
3. Resources of the budget shall be derived from annual contributions by Member States and such other sources as may be determined by the Council of Ministers.
4. The Budget shall be in balance as to revenues and expenditures.
5. A draft Budget for each financial year shall be prepared by the Executive Secretary and approved by the Council of Ministers.
6. There shall be special budgets to meet extraordinary expenditures of the Community.

ARTICLE 54Contributions by Member States

1. A protocol to be annexed to this Treaty shall state the mode by which the contribution of Member States shall be determined and the currencies in which the contribution is to be paid.
2. The Member States undertake to pay regularly their annual contributions to the Budget of the Community.
3. Where a Member State is in arrears at the end of the financial year in the payment of its contributions for reasons other than those caused by public or natural calamity or exceptional circumstances that gravely affect its economy, such Member States may, by a resolution of the Authority, be suspended from taking part in the activities of the institutions of the Community.

ARTICLE 55Financial Regulations

The Council of Ministers shall make financial regulations for the application of the provisions of this Chapter.



CHAPTER XIIISETTLEMENT OF DISPUTESARTICLE 56Procedure for the Settlement of Disputes

Any dispute that may arise among the Member States regarding the interpretation or application of this Treaty shall be amicably settled by direct agreement. In the event of failure to settle such disputes, the matter may be referred to the Tribunal of the Community by a party to such disputes and the decision of the Tribunal shall be final.

CHAPTER XIVGENERAL AND FINAL PROVISIONSARTICLE 57Headquarters of the Community

The Headquarters of the Community shall be determined by the Authority.

ARTICLE 58Official Languages

The official languages of the Community shall be such African languages declared official by the Authority and English and French.

ARTICLE 59Relation with other Regional Associations and Third Countries

1. Member States may be members of other regional or sub-regional associations, either with other Member States or non-Member States, provided that their membership of such associations does not derogate from the provisions of this Treaty.
2. The rights and obligations arising from agreements concluded before the definitive entry into force of this Treaty between one or more Member States on the one hand, and one Member State and a third country on the other hand, shall not be affected by the provisions of this Treaty.
3. To the extent that such agreements are not compatible with this Treaty, the Member State or States concerned shall take all appropriate steps to eliminate the incompatibilities established. Member States shall, where necessary, assist each other to this end and shall, where appropriate, adopt a common attitude.
4. In applying the agreements referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, Member States shall take into account the fact that the advantages accorded under this Treaty by each Member State form an integral part of the establishment of the Community and are thereby inseparably linked with the creation of common institutions, the conferring of powers upon them and the granting of the same advantages by all the other Member States.

ARTICLE 60Status, Privileges and Immunities

1. The Community, as an international organisation, shall enjoy legal personality.
2. The Community shall have in the territory of each Member State:
  - (a) the legal capacity required for the performance of its functions under this Treaty; and
  - (b) power to acquire, hold or dispose of movable or immovable property.
3. In the exercise of its legal personality under this Article, the Community shall be represented by the Executive Secretary.
4. The privileges and immunities to be granted to the officials of the Community at its Headquarters and in the Member States shall be the same as are accorded to diplomatic persons at the Headquarters of the Community and in the Member States. Similarly, the privileges and immunities granted to the Secretariat at the Headquarters of the Community shall be the same as granted to diplomatic missions at the Headquarters of the Community and in the Member States. Other privileges and immunities to be recognised and granted by the Member States in connection with the Community shall be determined by the Council of Ministers.

ARTICLE 61Setting up of the Institutions

1. The Authority shall at its first meeting after the entry into force of this Treaty:
  - (a) appoint the Executive Secretary.
  - (b) determine the Headquarters of the Community; and
  - (c) give such directions to the Council of Ministers and other institutions of the Community as are necessary for the expeditious and effective implementation of this Treaty.
2. Subject to the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the Council of Ministers shall, within two months of the entry into force of this Treaty, hold its first meeting to:
  - (a) appoint persons to offices in the Executive Secretariat in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty,
  - (b) give directions to other subordinate institutions,
  - (c) give directions to the Executive Secretary as to the implementation of the provisions of this Treaty, and
  - (d) perform such other duties as may be necessary for the expeditious and effective implementation of this Treaty.

ARTICLE 62Entry into Force, Ratification and Accession

1. This Treaty and the protocols which shall be annexed and which shall form an integral part of the Treaty shall respectively enter into force provisionally upon the signature by Heads of State and Government and definitively upon ratification by at least seven signatory States in accordance with the constitutional procedures applicable for each signatory State.
2. Any West African state may accede to this Treaty on such terms and conditions as the Authority may determine. Instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Federal Military Government of Nigeria which shall notify all other Member States. This Treaty shall enter into force in relation to an acceding state on such date as its Instrument of Accession is deposited.

ARTICLE 63Amendments and Revisions

1. Any Member State may submit proposals for the amendment or revision of this Treaty.
2. Any such proposals shall be submitted to the Executive Secretary who shall communicate them to other Member States not later than thirty days after the receipt of such proposals. Amendments or revisions shall be considered by the Authority after Member States have been given one month's notice thereof.

ARTICLE 64Withdrawal

1. Any Member State wishing to withdraw from the Community shall give to the Executive Secretary one year's written notice. At the end of this period of one year, if such notice is not withdrawn, such a State shall cease to be a member of the Community.
2. During the period of one year referred to in the preceding paragraph, such a Member State shall nevertheless observe the provisions of this Treaty, and shall remain liable for the discharge of its obligations under this Treaty.

ARTICLE 65Depository Government

The present Treaty and all Instruments of ratification and accessions shall be deposited with the Federal Military Government of Nigeria which shall transmit certified true copies of this Treaty to all Member States and notify them of the dates of deposits of the Instruments of ratification and accession, and shall register this Treaty with the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nation's Organisation and such other Organisations as the Council of Ministers shall determine.

IN FAITH WHEREOF, WE, THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN WEST AFRICA, HAVE SIGNED THIS TREATY.

DONE AT Lagos this 28th day of May, 1975, in single original in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic.

H.E. LT.-COL. MATHIEU KEREKOU

President of the Republic of  
Dahomey

H.E. LT.-COL. R. J. A. FELLI

Commissioner for Economic Planning  
for and on behalf of the Head of State  
and Chairman of the National Redemption  
Council of the Republic of Ghana.

H.E. SIR DAWDA JAWARA

President of the Republic of  
Gambia

H.E. DR. LANSANA BEAVOGUI

Prime Minister  
for and on behalf of the Head of State  
and Commander-in-Chief of the People's  
Revolutionary Armed Forces, President  
of the Republic of Guinea.

H.E. MR. LUIZ CABRAL

President of the Republic of  
Guinea-Bissau

H.E. LT.-COL. SEYNI KOUNTCHE

Head of State and President of the  
Supreme Military Council of the  
Republic of Niger

H.E. MR. FELIX HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY

President of the Republic of  
Ivory Coast

H.E. GENERAL YAKUBU GOWON

Head of the Federal Military Government,  
Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces  
of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

H.E. DR. WILLIAM R. TOLBERT, JR

President of the Republic of  
Liberia

H.E. MR. ABDOU DIOUF

Prime Minister  
for and on behalf of the President of  
the Republic of Senegal.

H.E. MAJOR BABA DIARRA

Vice Chairman  
for and on behalf of the  
Chairman of the Military  
Committee of National  
Liberation, President of  
the Republic of Mali.

H.E. DR. SIACA STEVENS

President of the Republic of  
Sierra Leone

H.E. MOKTAR OULD DADDAH

President of the Islamic  
Republic of Mauritania

H.E. GENERAL GNASSINGBE EYADEMA

President of the Togolese  
Republic

H.E. GENERAL A SANGOULE LAMIZANA

President of the Republic  
of Upper Volta.

ANNEX 2IMPROVEMENT OF BASIC TEXTS OF THE ECOWAS TREATY DOCUMENTS (1977/78)

1. Extension of the Provisions of Article 13 of the Treaty - to make the Consolidation of Tariff Barriers be applicable to non-tariff barriers.
2. Modification of Article 27 of the Treaty - to provide for a Protocol on Freedom of Movement, Right of Residence and Establishment and the redefinition of the concept of "Community Citizen".
3. Modification of Article 1 of the Protocol on Rules of Origin - the notion of "Value Added".
4. Modification of Article 11.1 (c) of the Protocol on Rules of Origin - replacement of "FOB Price" by the concept of 'ex-factory cost price before tax'.
5. Additional Protocol to Article 11.2 of the Protocol on Rules of Origin fixing the desirable levels of capital participation in enterprises producing Community originating goods.
6. Modification of Article III.4 of the Protocol on Rules of Origin - determining the accounting system to be adopted in lieu of physical segregation of materials.
8. Additional Protocol to Article VIII of the Protocol on Rules of Origin - determining conditions for accepting mixtures as originating products.
9. Extension of the provisions of the Protocol on re-exportation to cover originating goods re-exported within the Community.

Source: ECOWAS Document : ECW/DEVE/C/7781 (Lagos 81)  
Development of the Community - The First Five years (1977-1981)  
pp.20-22.

ANNEX 3ECOWAS SUBJECTS, STUDIES, REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

1. Critical Appraisal of Economic Conditions of the West African sub-region.
2. Study of Recorded Trade Flows within ECOWAS.
3. Unrecorded Trade Flows within ECOWAS.
4. Import and Export Regimes, Profiles, Potentials and Joint Promotion Measures.
5. Cooperation and Trade in Food Crop Products in the ECOWAS sub-region, Vols. I and II,
6. Cooperation and Trade in Livestock Products in the ECOWAS sub-region, Vols. I and II.
7. Cooperation in Fish and Fish Products in the ECOWAS sub-region, Vols. I and II.
8. Cooperation and Trade in Forestry and Forest Products in the ECOWAS sub-region, Vols. I and II.
9. Preliminary Report on Trade and Liberalization Options and Issues for ECOWAS.
10. Preliminary Study Approaches to Fiscal Cooperation and Harmonization in ECOWAS.
11. Currency Convertibility in the ECOWAS.

Source: ECOWAS Document : ECW/DEVE/C/7781 (Lagos, 81)  
Development of the Community - The First Five Years, (1977-81),  
pp.23-24.

STATE VISIT OF HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL YAKUBU GOWON, HEAD OF THE  
FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED  
FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA TO THE REPUBLIC OF TOGO.

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

At the invitation of His Excellency General Etienne Eyadema, President of the Republic of Togo, His Excellency General Yakubu Gowon, Head of the Federal Military Government, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, paid a state visit to the Republic of Togo from April 26 to May 1, 1972.

During the visit, General Gowon and members of his entourage visited a number of places in Togo where they were warmly and enthusiastically received by the people. The two Heads of State held a number of discussions on co-operation between their two countries. They exchanged views on current world problems particularly those concerning Africa.

On world affairs, the two Heads of State re-affirmed their support for the Charter and principles of the United Nations Organisation. They pledged to continue to work with all men of goodwill to promote world peace and international understanding. On African affairs, they stressed the need to improve and strengthen the machinery of the Organisation of African Unity and pledged the continued support of their governments for the liberation of African territories still under colonial and minority racist regimes.

The two Heads of State emphasised the need to promote cooperation among African countries at all levels - bilateral, regional and multilateral - as a positive means for achieving African unity. To this end, they agreed to establish an economic community made up of their two countries as a nucleus of a West African Economic Community. They directed that officials of their two countries should meet in Lagos in June, 1972 to consider ways and means of establishing the Togo/Nigeria Economic Community and submit recommendations to the governments of the two countries for study.

On bilateral relations, the two Heads of State expressed their entire satisfaction at the cordial and friendly ties between their two countries. They directed that officials of the two countries should meet and explore ways and means of improving trade between Nigeria and Togo within the framework of the Trade Agreement signed in 1966. The two Heads of State signed a Treaty of Friendship, co-operation and mutual assistance.

His Excellency General Gowon expressed his profound gratitude to President Eyadema, the government and the entire people of the Republic of Togo for their kindness and hospitality and invited His Excellency General Etienne Eyadema to pay a state visit to Nigeria on a mutually convenient date. General Eyadema has graciously accepted the invitation.

Done at Lome this 1st day of May, 1972.

(sgd) GOWON

General Yakubu Gowon  
Head of the Federal Military  
Government, Commander-in-Chief  
of the Armed Forces of the  
Federal Republic of Nigeria.

(sgd) EYADEMA

General Etienne Eyadema  
President of the Republic of Togo.



COMMUNIQUE FINAL

Son Excellence le general Yakubu GOWON, chef du gouvernement Federal, commandant en chef des Forces Armees de la Republique du NIGERIA, s'est rendu en visite officielle au Togo, du 26 Avril au 1er Mai 1972, sur l'invitation du general Etienne EYADEMA, President de la Republique Togolaise.

Au cours de cette visite, le general Gowon et sa suite se sont rendus dans plusieurs villes du Togo ou la population leur a reserve un accueil chaleureux et enthousiaste. Les deux Chefs d'Etat ont eu des entretiens relatifs a la cooperation entre leurs deux pays. Ils ont procede a un echange de vue sur les problemes mondiaux actuels et sur ceux relatifs a l'Afrique.

En ce qui concerne les problemes mondiaux, les deux Chefs d'Etat ont reaffirme leur attachement a la Charte et aux principes de l'Organisation des Nations Unies. Ils s'engagent a continuer d'oeuvrer avec tous les hommes de bonne volonte pour promouvoir la paix dans le monde et la comprehension entre les Nations.

Quant aux problemes africains, ils ont souligne la necessite d'ameliorer et de renforcer les rouages de l'Organisation de l'Unite Africaine et se sont engages a apporter le soutien de leurs gouvernements pour la liberation des territoires africains encore sous domination coloniale et sous les regimes minoritaires racistes.

Convaincus que l'unite africaine passe necessairement par des ensembles economiques regionaux ou sousregionaux viables, et fermement decides a traduire dans la realite leur commune volonte d'instaurer une cooperation effective, ils ont decide de creer, au niveau des deux Etats, un ensemble economique veritable embryon d'une communaute economique ouestafricaine ouverte a tous les Etats freres.

A cette fin, une commission d'experts des deux pays, charges d'etudier les structures de cet ensemble, se reunira au mois de Juin a Lagos pour soumettre aux deux Chefs d'Etat un projet d'acte constitutif de cet ensemble.

Dans le domaine des relations bilaterales, les chefs d'Etat ont souligne leur entiere satisfaction quant aux liens d'amitie qui existent entre leurs deux pays.

Ils ont decide que des representants des deux pays se rencontrent pour etudier les voies et moyens propres a ameliorer les relations commerciales entre le Nigeria et le Togo dans le cadre du traite de commerce signe en 1966.

Les deux Chefs d'Etat ont signe un traite d'amitie, de cooperation et d'assistance mutuelle.

Son Excellence le General Gowon a exprime sa tres profonde gratitude envers le general Etienne EYADEMA, le gouvernement et le peuple de la Republique Togolaise pour leurs temoignages d'amitie, ainsi que pour leur hospitalite, et a invite le general Etienne Eyadema a se rendre en visite officielle au Nigeria a une date a determiner d'un commun accord. Le general Eyadema a aimablement accepte cette invitation.

Fait a LOME, le 1er Mai 1972

signe:  
General Yakubua GOWON

signe:  
General E. EYADEMA

ANNEX 5PROTOCOL RELATING TO THE DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF PRODUCTS ORIGINATING FROM MEMBER STATES OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATESTHE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

Having regard to paragraph 2 of Article 15 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States concerning the definition of the concept of products originating from Member States:

AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE 1Definitions

"Treaty" means the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States:

"Council" means the Council of Ministers established by Article 6 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States:

"Commission" means the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission established by Article 9 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States:

"Member State" or "Member States" means a Member State or Member States of the Economic Community of West African States:

"Producer" includes a grower or a manufacturer or any person who supplies his goods otherwise than by sale to another person and to whose order the last process in the course of the manufacture of the goods is applied by that other person:

"Materials" include raw materials, semi-finished products, products, parts and components used in the production of goods:

"Produced" and "a process of production" include the application of any operation or process with the exception of any operation or processes listed in Article IV of the Protocol:

"Value-added" means the difference between the ex-factory price of the finished product including subsidies, if any, less local taxes and duties, and the c.i.f. value of the material imported from third countries and used in the production.

ARTICLE IIRules of Origin of Community Goods

The promotion of trade in goods originating in Member States as well as the collective economic development of the Community requires indigenous ownership and participation. Goods shall be accepted as originating in Member States for purposes of trade liberalisation if:

(a) they have been wholly produced as defined in Article V of this Protocol: or

(b) they have been produced in a Member State other than by any of the operations and processes listed in Article IV of this Protocol or with the material from a foreign or undetermined origin used in the process of production of goods whose C.I.F. value does not exceed 60% of the total cost of the material employed in the production or with the material of Community origin whose value must not in any case be less than 40% of the total cost of the material used in the process of production or with the raw material of Community origin representing in quantity at least 60% of the whole raw material used in the production: or

(c) if the goods have been produced from material of a foreign or undetermined origin and having received in the process of production a value added of at least 35% of the F.O.B. price of the finished product: and

2. If the Enterprises producing these goods attain a desirable level of indigenous ownership and participation. The Commission shall, on the basis of appropriate statistics, make proposals to the Council of Ministers to determine orientations and levels relating to ownership and participation.

3. Any conditions of acceptance of goods originating in Member States for Community trade may be reviewed periodically by the Council.

### ARTICLE III

#### Evidence of Community Origin

The claim that goods shall be accepted as originating from a Member State in accordance with the provisions of this Protocol, shall be supported by a certificate in the form prescribed in Annex A to this Protocol and indicating therein the percentage and origin of the materials used and/or the percentage of value-added as the case may be, in the process of production and the fact of direct consignment. A certificate shall be given by the competent authority designated for that purpose by the exporting Member State where the goods have been produced and countersigned by the Customs Department of that Member State.

2. The competent authority designed by an importing Member State may, notwithstanding the presentation of a certificate issued in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article, require, in case of doubt, further verification of the declarations made in a certificate.

3. In determining the place of production of marine, river or lake products and goods, a vessel of a Member State shall be regarded as part of that State. In determining the place from which goods originated, marine, river or lake products taken from the sea, river or lake, or goods produced there from at sea or on a river or lake, shall be regarded as having their origin in a Member State if they are taken by, or produced in, a vessel of that State and have been brought directly to the territories of the Member States.

4. For the purposes of paragraph 3 of this Article, a vessel shall be regarded as a vessel of a Member State only if:

(a) it is registered in a Member State.

(b) it carries a complement (inclusive of the Master thereof) of which not less than fifty per cent are nationals of Member States: and

(c) at least majority control and equity holdings in respect of the vessel are in the hands of nationals of Member States and/or a Government or Governments of Member States or institutions, agencies, enterprises or corporations of such Government or Governments.

#### ARTICLE IV

##### Processes not conferring origin

For the purpose of sub-paragraphs (b) and (c) of paragraph 1 of Article II of this Protocol, the following operations and processes shall be considered as insufficient to support a claim that goods originate from a Member State:

(a) packing, bottling, placing in flasks, bags, cases, boxes, fixing on cards or boards and all other simple packing operations:

(b) mixing of products except as provided for in Article VII of this Protocol:

(c) operations to ensure the preservation of merchandise in good condition during transportation and storage such as ventilation, spreading out, drying, freezing, placing in brine, sulphur dioxide or other aqueous solutions, removal of damaged parts and similar operations:

(d) changes of packing and breaking up or assembly of consignments:

(e) simple assembly of parts of a product to constitute a complete product:

(f) marking or labelling for distinguishing products or their packages:

(g) simple operations consisting of removal of dust, sifting or screening, sorting classifying, matching including the making up of sets of goods, washing, painting and cutting up:

(h) a combination of two or more operations specified in sub-paragraphs (a) to (g) of this Article.

(i) slaughter of animals.

#### ARTICLE V

##### Goods wholly produced in the Member States

For the purpose of sub-paragraph 1 of Article II of this Protocol, the following are among the products which shall be regarded as wholly produced in the Member States:

(a) mineral products extracted from the ground or sub-soil or sea bed of the Member States:

(b) vegetable products harvested within the Member States:

- (c) live animals born and or raised within the Member States:
- (d) products obtained within the Member States from live animals in (c) above:
- (e) products obtained by hunting or fishing conducted within the Member States:
- (f) products obtained from the sea and from rivers and lakes within the Member States by a vessel of a Member State:
- (g) products manufactured in a factory of a Member State exclusively from the products referred to in sub-paragraph (f) of this Article:
- (h) used articles fit only for the recovery of materials, provided that such articles have been collected from users within the Member States:
- (i) scrap and waste resulting from manufacturing operations within the Member States:
- (j) goods produced within the Member States exclusively or mainly from one or both of the following:
  - (i) products within sub-paragraphs (a) to (i):
  - (ii) materials containing no element imported from outside the Member States or of undetermined origin.

#### ARTICLE VI

##### Application of percentage and value-added criteria

For the purposes of sub-paragraph (b) and (c) of Article II of this Protocol:

- (a) the value of any materials which can be identified as having been imported from a third country shall be their c.i.f. value accepted by the Customs Authorities on clearance for home use, or on temporary admission, at the time of last importation into the Member State where they were used in a process of production, less the amount of transport costs incurred in transit through other Member States.
- (b) If the value of any materials imported from outside the Member States cannot be determined in accordance with sub-paragraph (b) of this Article, their value shall be the earliest ascertainable price paid for them in the Member State where they were used in a process of production:
- (c) if the origin of any materials cannot be determined, such materials shall be deemed to have been imported from a foreign country and their value shall be the earliest ascertainable price paid for them in the Member State where they were used in a process of production:
- (d) the ex-factory price of the goods shall be the price paid or payable for them to the exporter in the Member State where the goods were produced, that price being adjusted, where necessary, to an f.o.b. or free at frontier basis in that State.

ARTICLE VIISegregation of materials.

1. For those products or industries where it would be impracticable for the producer to segregate physically materials of similar character but different origin used in the production of goods, such segregation may be replaced by an appropriate accounting system which ensures that no more goods are deemed to originate in the Member States than would have been the case if the producer had been able physically to segregate the materials.
2. Any such accounting system shall conform to such conditions as may be agreed upon by the Council in order to ensure that adequate control measures will be applied.

ARTICLE VIIITreatment of mixtures

1. In the case of mixtures, not being groups, set or assemblies of goods dealt with under Article VII of this Protocol, a Member State may refuse to accept as originating in a Member State any product resulting from the mixing together of goods which would qualify as originating in the Member State with goods which would not so qualify, if the characteristics of the product as a whole are not essentially different from the characteristics of the goods which have been mixed.
2. In the case of particular products where it is, however, recognised by the Council to be desirable to permit mixing of the kind described in paragraph 1 of this Article, such products shall be accepted as originating in the Member States in respect of such part thereof as may be shown to correspond to the quantity of goods originating in the Member States used in the mixing subject to such conditions as may be agreed by the Council upon the recommendation of the Commission.

ARTICLE IXTreatment of packing

1. Where for purposes of assessing customs duties a Member State treats goods separately from their packing, it may also, in respect of its imports consigned from another Member State, determine separately the origin of such packing.
2. Where paragraph 1 of this Article is not applicable, packing shall be considered as forming a whole with the goods, and no part of any packing required for their transport or storage shall be considered as having been imported from a foreign country, when determining the origin of the goods as a whole.
3. For the purpose of paragraph 2 of this Article packing with which goods are ordinarily sold by retail shall not be regarded as packing required for the transport or storage of goods.

ARTICLE XUnit of qualification

1. Each product in a consignment shall be considered separately.

2. For the purposes of paragraph 1 of this Article:

(a) where the Nomenclature of the Customs Cooperation Council specifies that a group, set or assembly of products is to be classified within a single heading, such a group, set or assembly shall be treated as one product:

(b) tools, parts and accessories which are imported with a product, and the price of which is included in that of the product or for which no separate charge is made, shall be considered as forming a whole with the product, provided that they constitute the standard equipment customarily included on the sale of products of that kind:

(c) in cases not within sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) of this Article, goods shall be treated as a single product if they are so treated for purposes of assessing customs duties on like products by the important Member State.

3. An unassembled or disassembled product which is imported in more than one consignment because it is not feasible for transport or production reasons to import it in a single consignment shall, be treated as one product.

ARTICLE XIMovement of goods in transit

Where a Member State exports its products to another Member State through other Member States, such exportation shall be in accordance with International Transit procedures.

ARTICLE XIIRegulations

The Council shall make regulations concerning proof and the verification of proof of goods originating from Member States in pursuance of this Protocol.

ARTICLE XIIIInfringement and Sanctions

1. Member States undertake to introduce legislation, making such provision as may be necessary for penalties against persons who, in their state, furnish or cause to be furnished a document which is untrue in a material particularly in support of a claim in another Member State that goods should be accepted as originating from the Member States.

2. Any Member State to which an untrue claim is made in respect of the origin of goods shall immediately bring the issue to the attention of the exporting Member State from which the untrue claim is made so that the appropriate action can be taken.

3. A Member State shall be under no obligation to institute or continue court proceedings, if it has not been requested to do so by the importing Member State to which the untrue claim was made.

4. Without prejudice to the powers conferred upon the Tribunal of the Economic Community of West African States established by Article II of the Treaty, continued infringement by a Member State of the provisions of this Protocol may be referred by another Member State to the Council through the Commission.

#### ARTICLE XIV

##### Deposit and Entry into Force

1. This Protocol shall enter into force provisionally upon signature by Heads of State and Government of Member States and definitively upon ratification by at least seven signatory States in accordance with the constitutional procedures applicable for each signatory state.

2. This Protocol and all the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Depository Government of the Treaty which shall transmit certified true copies of this Protocol to all Member States and notify them of the dates of deposits of the instruments of ratification and shall register this Protocol with the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations and such organisations as the Council shall determine.

3. This Protocol shall be annexed to and shall form an integral part of the Treaty.

IN FAITH WHEREOF, WE THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN  
WEST AFRICA, HAVE SIGNED THIS PROTOCOL.

DONE AT LOME this 5th day of November, 1976, in single original  
in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic.

H.E. Lt. MATHIEU KEREROU

President of the People's Republic  
of Benin

H.E. Mr. A.M. CAMARA

Vice-President  
for and on behalf of the President  
of the Republic of Gambia

Hon. Dr. K.A. GARDINER  
Commissioner for Economic Planning for  
and on behalf of the Head of State and  
Chairman of the National Redemption  
Council of the Republic of Ghana

H.E. Dr. LANSANA BEAVOGUI

Prime Minister  
for and on behalf of the Head of  
State and Commander-in-Chief of  
the People's Revolutionary Armed  
Forces, President of the Republic  
of Guinea

H.E. Mr. LUIZ CABRAL

President of the Republic of  
Guinea-Bissau

H.E. Mr. FELIX HOUPHOUET-  
BOIGNY  
President of the Republic of  
Ivory Coast



H.E.Dr.William R.TOLBERT,Jr.  
President of the Republic of Liberia

H.E.Lt.GENERAL OLUSEGUN OBASANJO  
Head of the Federal Military  
Government, Commander-in-Chief  
of the Armed Forces of the  
Federal Republic of Nigeria

Hon. Mr. FOUNEKE KEITA  
Minister of Finance and Trade for  
and on behalf of the Chairman of  
the Military Committee of National  
Liberation, President of the Republic  
of Mali

H.E. Mr.Leopold Sedar SENGHOR  
President of the Republic of  
Senegal

H.E.MOKTAR OULD DADDAH  
President of the Islamic Republic  
of Mauritania

H.E. Dr. SIAKA STEVENS  
President of the Republic of  
Sierra Leone

H.E. Lt.-Col.SEYNI KOUNTCHE  
Head of State and Chairman of the  
Supreme Military Council of the  
Republic of Niger

H.E. GENERAL GNASSINGBE EYADEMA  
President of the Togo Republic

H.E. GENERAL A.SANGOULE LAMIZANA  
President of the Republic of Upper  
Volta

## ANNEX A

ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES  
MOVEMENT CERTIFICATE

Ref.No.....

1. NAME OF EXPORTER AND OFFICE  
ADDRESS (Not P.O.Box or PMB)

.....

2. CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN

.....

3. NAME OF CONSIGNEE AND  
OFFICE ADDRESS

.....

5. Country, group of countries in which  
the products are considered as  
originating

.....

4. PARTICULARS OF TRANSPORT

.....

6 Customs tariff no.	7 Marks &	8 Number and kind of packages and	9 Origin criterion (See Overleaf)	10 Weigh Gross Net	11 F.Q.B. Value

12. DECLARATION BY EXPORTER

I, the undersigned, hereby declare  
that the above details and statement  
are correct, that all the goods are  
produced in

.....

Signature of Declarant  
(Place & Date)

13. CERTIFICATE

It is hereby certified that the  
above mentioned goods are of

.....origin

Authorised Signature of Certifying  
Body.

Place and Date of issue

OFFICIAL STAMP

## 14. REQUEST FOR VERIFICATION, to

Verification of the authenticity and accuracy of this certificate is requested

.....

(Place and date)

Stamp

.....

Signature)

## 15. RESULT OF VERIFICATION

Verification carried out shows that this certificate (1)

\_\_\_\_\_

was issued by the Customs Office indicated and that the information contained therein is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

does not meet the requirements as to authenticity and accuracy (see notes attached).

\_\_\_\_\_

.....

(Place and date)

Stamp

.....

(Signature)

(1) Insert \* in the appropriate box

## NOTES

## Rules for the Issuing of Certificate of Origin.

- (i) The forms may be completed by any process, provided that the entries are indelible and legible;
- (ii) Neither erasures nor super-impositions should be allowed on the certificates. Any alterations should be made by striking out the erroneous material and making any addition required. Such alterations should be approved by the person who made them and certified by the appropriate authority or body;
- (iii) Any unused spaces should be crossed out to prevent any subsequent addition.
- (iv) If warranted by export trade requirements, one or more copies may be drawn up in addition to the original.

## 2. Origin Criteria

- (i) That all the goods (mentioned overleaf) have been wholly produced or manufactured in .....
- (ii) They have been produced in the Member State but not manufactured as a result of any of the processes listed in Article IV of the Protocol on Definition of Originating Products and the percentage of the materials imported from a foreign country or of undetermined origin which have been used at any stage of the production of the goods does not exceed 60 per cent or the percentage of the inputs of Community origin shall not be less than 40%; or
- (iii) They have been produced in the Member State (but are not manufactured as a result of any of the processes listed in Article IV of the Protocol on Definition of originating products) from materials imported from a third country or of undetermined origin and the value-added in the process of production accounts for at least thirty-five per cent of the f.o.b. price of the finished product.
- (iv) They have been produced by enterprises referred to in paragraph 1 of the Protocol;
- (v) They have been consigned directly from one member-State to another.

PROTOCOL RELATING TO THE RE-EXPORTATION WITHIN  
THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES  
OF GOODS IMPORTED FROM THIRD COUNTRIES.

## THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

Aware of the necessity to facilitate the implementation of Article 22 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States on the re-exportation within the Community of goods imported from third countries:

AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

### ARTICLE 1

#### Definitions

In this Protocol:

"Treaty" means the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States;

"Community" means the Economic Community of West African States;

"Council" means the Council of Ministers established by Article 6 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States;

"Commission" means the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission established by Article 9 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States;

"Barter Agreement" means any agreement or arrangement by which goods are imported into a Member State of the Community, being goods for which settlement may be affected, in whole or in part, by the direct exchange of goods;

"Customs Duty" shall include import duties and taxes of equivalent effect;

"Re-exportation" means the exportation from a Member State to another Member State of goods originally imported from a third country.

### ARTICLE II

#### Customs Duty Collected to be Refunded in the Collecting State

1. Where any goods, which are imported into a Member State of the Community from a third country and in respect of which customs duty has been charged and collected in that State (in this paragraph referred to as "the Collecting State") are transferred to one of the other Member States of the Community (in this paragraph referred to as "the Consuming State") the following provisions shall apply:

(a) An administrative fee representing 0.5% of the c.i.f. value of every consignment being re-exported is to be charged by the Collecting State.

(b) The Collecting State shall refund to the importer within its territory, the full amount of duty paid on the goods while other costs such as c.i.f., port charges, etc., involved in the importation are to be included in the invoiced price to be paid by the importer in the Consuming State.

(c) The Consuming State shall charge and collect the duty payable on such goods.

2. Where goods which are imported into a Member State of the Community from a third country and in respect of which customs duty is charged and collected in that State (in this paragraph referred to as "the Collecting State") are wholly or in part used in Collecting State in the manufacture of other goods (in this Article referred to as "the manufactured goods"), and the manufactured goods are subsequently transferred to another Member State of the Community (in this Article referred to as "the Consuming State"), the Collecting State shall refund to the importer within its territory the full amount of the duty collected in respect of the goods imported and used in the production of the manufactured goods subsequently transferred to the Consuming State.

#### ARTICLE III

##### Power of the Council of Ministers of the Community.

1. The Council of Ministers of the Community may make regulations generally for the better carrying into effect of the provisions of this Protocol and matters connected therewith.

2. Without prejudice to the measures referred to in Article 23 of the Treaty and to this Protocol, the Council may, on the recommendation of the Commission lay down other conditions under which re-exportation of goods from third countries may be permitted under this Protocol. Such conditions shall include the type, the minimum value and quantity of goods that may be re-exported and the minimum amount of customs duty that may be refunded by a Member State.

#### ARTICLE IV

##### Infringements

1. Without prejudice to the powers conferred upon the Tribunal of the Community established under Article II of the Treaty, continued infringement by a Member State of the provisions of this Protocol may be referred by another Member State to the Council through the Commission.

## ARTICLE V

## The Provisions of this Protocol and the Treaty

The provisions of this Protocol shall where specific provisions exist on the same subject matter in the Treaty be so construed as to complement each other.

## ARTICLE VI

## Deposit and Entry into Force

1. This Protocol shall enter into force provisionally upon signature by Heads of State and Government of Member States and definitively upon ratification by at least seven Member States in accordance with the constitutional procedure applicable for each signatory State.
2. This Protocol and all the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Depositary Government of the Treaty which shall transmit certified true copies of this Protocol to all Member States and notify them of the dates of deposits of the instruments of ratification and shall register this Protocol with the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations and such organisations as the Council shall determine.
3. This Protocol shall be annexed to and shall form an integral part of the Treaty.

IN FAITH WHEREOF, WE, THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN

WEST AFRICA, HAVE SIGNED THIS PROTOCOL

DONE AT Lomé this 5th day of November, 1976 in single original in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic.

.....  
 H.E. Ltd. MATHIEU KEREKOU  
 President of People's Republic of  
 Benin

.....  
 H.E. Mr. A.M. CAMARA  
 Vice-President  
 for and on behalf of the President  
 of the Republic of Gambia

.....  
 Hon. Dr. K.A. GARDINER  
 Commissioner for Economic Planning  
 for and on behalf of the Head of State  
 and Chairman of the National Redemption  
 Council of the Republic of Ghana

.....  
 H.E. MOKTAR OULD DADDAH  
 President of the Islamic Republic  
 of Mauritania



.....  
 H.E. Dr. LANSANA BEAVOGUI  
 Prime Minister  
 for and on behalf of the Head  
 of State and Commander-in-Chief  
 of the People's Revolutionary  
 Armed Forces, President of  
 the Republic of Guinea

.....  
 H.E. Mr. LUIZ CABRAL  
 President of the Republic of  
 Guinea-Bissau

.....  
 H.E. Mr. FELIX HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY  
 President of the Republic of the  
 Ivory Coast

.....  
 H.E. Dr. WILLIAM R. TOLBERT Jr.  
 President of the Republic of  
 Liberia

.....  
 Hon. Mr. FOUNEKE KETTA  
 Minister of Finance and Trade  
 for and on behalf of the Chairman  
 of the Military Committee of  
 National Liberation, President of  
 the Republic of Mali.

.....  
 H.E. Lt.-Col. SFYNT KOUNTCHE  
 Head of State and Chairman of the  
 Supreme Military Council of the  
 Republic of Niger

.....  
 H.E. Lt. General OLUSEGUN OBASANJO  
 Head of the Federal Military  
 Government, Commander-in-Chief of  
 the Armed Forces of the Federal  
 Republic of Nigeria

.....  
 H.E. Mr. LEOPOLD SEDAR SENGHOR  
 President of the Republic  
 of Senegal

.....  
 H.E. Dr. SIAKA STEVENS  
 President of the Republic of  
 Sierra Leone

.....  
 H.E. General GNASSINGBE EYADEMA  
 President of the Togo Republic

.....  
 H.E. General A. SANGOULE LAMIZANA  
 President of the Republic of  
 Upper Volta.

PROTOCOL ON THE ASSESSMENT OF LOSS OF REVENUE  
BY MEMBER STATES

## THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

Recalling the provision of paragraph 2 of Article 25 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States to the effect that the precise method of assessing loss of revenue from import duties shall be set out in a Protocol in the said Treaty:

AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

### ARTICLE 1

#### Definitions:

In this Protocol:

"Treaty" means the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States.

"Community" means the Economic Community of West African States established by Article 1 of the Treaty.

"Member State" or "Member States", means a Member State or Member States of the Community;

"Council" means the Council of Ministers established by Article 6 of the Treaty;

"Commission" means the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission established by sub-paragraph (a) of paragraph 1 of Article 9 of the Treaty;

"Import duties" shall have the same meaning ascribed to it in paragraph 1 of Article 13 of the Treaty;

### ARTICLE II

#### 1. Assessment of Loss of Revenue

(a) The loss of revenue in respect of one year shall be equal to the differences between the total duties that would result from the application to commodities, duties and taxes applicable to such commodities before the coming into force of the Treaty if they originated from a third country enjoying most favoured Nations treatment and the amount actually collected as a result of the application of the Treaty.

(b) The exporting Member State shall effect to the Fund the payment of compensations in respect of losses occasioned by her exports. Those payments in respect of loss of revenue shall constitute permanent resources of the Fund that are not liable to be transferred, except only as exclusive payments in respect of losses incurred.

(c) The Council of Ministers in the light of the experience acquired from the operation and functioning of the Fund and of the Community may from time to time modify the method of assessment of loss of revenue referred to in (a) and (b) of this paragraph.

## 2. Methods of Payment

(a) The competent departments of the Secretariat and the Management of the Fund of the Community shall make recommendations to the Council of Ministers on the compensation to be paid in respect of loss of revenue by taking into account the available resources in accordance with the objectives of the Fund and the budgetary requirements of the Member States that have suffered such losses.

(b) The assessment of losses shall be notified and the payment of compensation shall be effected at the same time to all beneficiary Member States.

## ARTICLE III

### Power of the Council

1. The Council may request that the statistics and information submitted to it by a Member State for the purpose of the assessment of loss of revenue from import duties shall be verified by the Executive Secretary of the Community. The Executive Secretary of the Community may also request a Member State to furnish further details of the statistics and information submitted by it in relation to loss of revenue.

2. The provisions of this Protocol shall in no way derogate from the powers vested in the Council by paragraph 1 of Article 25 of the Treaty as to the determination of compensation to be paid to a Member State.

## ARTICLE IV

### Deposit and Entry into Force

1. This Protocol shall enter into force provisionally upon signature by Heads of State and Government of Member States and definitively upon ratification by at least seven Member States in accordance with the constitutional procedure applicable for each signatory State.

2. This Protocol and all the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Depository Government of the Treaty which shall transmit certified true copies of this Protocol to all Member States and notify them of the dates of deposits of the instruments of ratification and shall register this Protocol with the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations and such organisations as the Council shall determine.

3. This Protocol shall be annexed to and shall form an integral part of the Treaty.

IN FAITH WHEREOF, WE THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN WEST AFRICA,  
HAVE SIGNED THIS PROTOCOL

DONE AT LOME this 5th day of November, 1976 in single original in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic.

.....

H.E. Lt.MATHIEU KEREKOU  
President of People's Republic  
of Benin

.....

H.E. Mr.A.M.CAMARA  
Vice-President  
for and on behalf of the President  
of the Republic of Gambia

.....

Hon. Dr. K.A. GARDINER  
Commission for Economic Planning  
for and on behalf of the Head of  
State and Chairman of the National  
Redemption Council of the Republic  
of Ghana

.....

H.E. Mr. FELIX HOUPOUËT-BOIGNY  
President of the Republic of  
Ivory Coast

.....

Hon. Mr. FOUNEKE KETTA  
Minister of Finance and Trade  
for and on behalf of the  
Chairman of the Military Committee  
of National Liberation, President  
of the Republic of Mali

.....

H.E.MOKTAR OULD DADDAH  
President of the Islamic Republic  
of Mauritania

.....

H.E. Lt.-Col SEYNI KOUNTCHE  
Head of State and Chairman of  
the Supreme Military Council of  
the Republic of Niger

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H.E. Dr. LANSANA BEAVOGUI  
Prime Minister  
for and on behalf of the Head  
of State and Commander-in-Chief  
of the People's Revolutionary  
Armed Forces, President of the  
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H.E. Mr.LUIZ CABRAL  
President of the Republic of Guinea  
Bissau

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H.E. Dr. WILLIAM R. TOLBERT, Jr  
President of the Republic of Liberia

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H.E.Lt.General OLUSEGUN OBASANJO  
Head of the Federal Military  
Government, Commander-in-Chief  
of the Armed Forces of the  
Federal Republic of Nigeria

.....

H.E. Mr.Leopold SEDAR SENGHOR  
President of the Republic of  
Senegal

.....

H.E. Dr. SIAKA STEVENS  
President of the Republic of  
Sierra Leone

.....

H.E. General GNASSINGBE EYADEMA  
President of the Republic of  
Togo

.....

H.E. General A.SANGOULE LAMIZAI  
President of the Republic of Upper

PROTOCOL RELATING TO THE FUND  
FOR COOPERATION, COMPENSATION  
AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY  
OF WEST AFRICAN STATES

# THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

Recalling Article 50 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States whereby the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development was established, and Recalling further paragraph 3 of Article 51 of the said Treaty which requires that the method of determining the contributions to be paid by Member States, and administrative and other matters relating to the Fund for Co-operation, Compensation and Development should be set out in a Protocol to be annexed to the said Treaty:

AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

## ARTICLE 1

### Definitions:

In this Protocol:

"Treaty" means the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States;

"Community" means the Economic Community of West African States established by Article 1 of the Treaty;

"Member State" or "Member States" means a member state or member states of the Community;

"Authority" means the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Community established by Article 5 of the Treaty;

"Council" means the Council of Ministers of the Community established by Article 6 of the Treaty;

"Executive Secretary" means the Executive Secretary of the Community appointed under Article 8 of the Treaty;

"Fund" means the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development established by Article 50 of the Treaty;

"Board of Directors" means the Board of Directors of the Fund;

"Chairman" means the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Fund.

"Managing Director" means the Managing Director of the Fund;

## ARTICLE 2

## Purposes of the Fund:

The Fund shall be used to:

(a) provide compensation and other forms of assistance to Member States which have suffered losses as a result of the application of the provisions of this Treaty;

(b) provide compensation to Member States which have suffered losses as a result of the location of Community enterprises;

(c) provide grants for financing national or Community research and development activities;

(d) grant loans for feasibility studies and development projects in Member States;

(e) guarantee foreign investments made in member-states in respect of enterprises established in pursuance of the provisions of the Treaty on the harmonization of industrial policies;

(f) provide means to facilitate the sustained mobilization of internal and external financial resources for the Member States and the Community; and

(g) promote development projects in the less developed Member States of the Community.

## ARTICLE 3

## Ordinary Capital Resources of the Fund

In the context of this Protocol, the term "ordinary capital resources" of the Fund shall include:

(a) the capital of the Fund, including both paid and unpaid contributions determined under Article 5 and authorised in pursuance of the provisions of Article 7 of this Protocol;

(b) income from enterprises either wholly or partly owned by the Community;

(c) receipts from bilateral and multilateral sources as well as other foreign sources;

(d) subsidies and contributions of all kinds and from all sources;

(e) income derived from loans made from the above mentioned resources or from guarantees given by the Fund;

(f) borrowing by the Fund; and

(g) any other resources or income received by the Fund which do not form part of its Special Facilities referred to in Article 4 of this Protocol.



## ARTICLE 4

## Special Facilities:

1. The Fund shall accept for administration the resources of any special facilities.
2. The term "Special Facilities" as used in this Protocol shall refer to the resources of any Special Facilities and shall include:
  - (a) funds contributed by Member States as may be determined by the Council for the provision of compensation and other forms of assistance to Member States;
  - (b) funds accepted by the Fund in any Special Facility;
  - (c) funds repaid in respect of loans or guarantees financed from any Special Facility which, under the regulations of the Fund covering that Special Facility, are received by such Special Facility;
  - (d) income derived from operations of the Fund in which any of the above-mentioned resources or funds are used or committed if, under the regulations of the Fund covering the Special Facilities concerned, that income accrued to such Special Facilities; and
  - (e) funds from such sources as the Fund may consider appropriate for the promotion of the purposes of the Fund including compensation to Member States.
3. Special Facilities, accepted by the Fund under paragraph 1 of this Article shall be used in such manner and on such terms and conditions as are not inconsistent with other objectives of the Fund and the agreement under which such resources are accepted by the Fund for administration and where so specified, to provide compensation and other forms of assistance to Member States.
4. Without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 25 of the Treaty, the Board of Directors shall make such regulations as may be necessary for the administration and use of Special Facilities.

## ARTICLE 5

## Contributions by Member States

1. The contribution of each Member State excluding the contribution relating to compensation of loss of revenue referred to in Article 4 paragraph 2, sub-paragraph (a) of this Protocol in respect of the other resources referred to in Articles 3 and 4 of this protocol shall be assessed on the basis of a co-efficient which takes into account the Gross Domestic Product and the Per Capita Income of all Member States. For this purpose, the co-efficient shall be calculated as one-half of the ratio of the Gross Domestic Product of each Member State to the total Gross Domestic product of all Member States plus one-half of the ratio of the Per Capita Income of each Member State to the total Per Capita Income of all the Member States.

2. The statistics and other data on the Gross Domestic Product and population of the Member States published by the United Nations shall be used in calculating the co-efficient referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.

## ARTICLE 6

### Payment of Contributions:

1. Each Member State shall in such instalments as may be determined by the Council pay into the Fund the amount assessed to be paid by it under the provisions of Article 5 of this Protocol.
2. Unless otherwise decided by the Council, 100 per cent of the amount assessed to be paid by Member States under this Article shall be paid in specified convertible currency.
3. The unit of account in which the budget of the Fund shall be prepared shall be the Special Drawing Rights of the International Monetary Fund.
4. For the purposes of this Article "Convertible Currency" shall be currency which is declared as such by the International Monetary Fund and such other currencies as the Council may from time to time designate.
5. The exchange value of the currencies of Member States for the purposes of paragraph 2 of this Article shall be the official declared rate to the International Monetary Fund on the date of payment. Where the currency of a Member State is floating the day's average of the selling and buying rates of the Central Bank of the Member State shall be used.
6. The Fund shall determine the place for any payment of contribution, provided that until the first meeting of the Board of Directors, payment shall be made to the Central Bank of the Member State where the Executive Secretariat of the Community is situated, as Trustee to the Fund.
7. The liability of a Member State to the Fund shall be limited to the unpaid contributions due from them under the provisions of this Protocol.

## ARTICLE 7

### Additional Resources:

The Board of Directors shall periodically review the adequacy of the resources of the Fund and may, if it deems it desirable, propose for the approval of the Council an increase in the contributions to be paid Member States and the currencies and the way in which such payment should be made. The Board of Directors may also propose for the approval of the Council other methods of increasing the resources of the Fund.

## ARTICLE 8

## Operations General:

The resources of the Fund shall be used exclusively to implement the purposes of the Fund as set forth in Article 2 of this Protocol.

## ARTICLE 9

## Other and Special Operations:

1. The operations of the Fund shall consist of ordinary operations and special operations. Ordinary operations shall be those financed from the Special Facilities referred to in Article 4 of this Protocol.
2. The ordinary capital resources and the Special Facilities of the Fund shall at all times and in all respects be held, used, committed, invested or otherwise disposed of entirely separately from each other.
3. The ordinary capital resources of the Fund shall not be charged with, or used to discharge, losses or liabilities arising out of special operations for which Special Facilities were originally used or committed.
4. Expenses relating directly to ordinary operations shall be charged to ordinary capital resources of the Fund and those relating to special operations shall be charged to the Special Facilities. Any other expenses shall be charged as the Board of Directors shall determine.

## ARTICLE 10

## Methods of Operation:

1. Subject to the conditions set forth in this Protocol, and for the purposes of the Fund, the Fund may provide guarantees in respect of foreign investments, provide finances for and facilitate the financing of projects of Member States of the Community or promote development in the less developed Member States in any of the following ways to any agency, entity or enterprise which is subject to majority participation and control by nationals, including Governments or Government or inter-governmentally-owned enterprises or corporations of Member States.
  - (a) by making or participating in direct subventions and loans with its unimpaired paid-up capital and, except in the case of its Special Reserve as defined in Article 17 of this Protocol, with its reserves or undistributed surplus or with the unimpaired Special Facilities other than those designated for use in granting compensation to Member States in accordance with paragraph 2 of this Article;
  - (b) by making or participating in direct loans with funds raised by the Fund in capital markets or borrowed or otherwise acquired by the Fund for inclusion in its ordinary resources;
  - (c) by the investment of funds referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) of this Article in equity capital of an institution or enterprise; or
  - (d) by guaranteeing in whole or in part, loans or foreign investments made in Member States in respect of enterprises established in pursuance of the provisions of this Treaty on the harmonization of industrial policies.

2. The Special Facilities designated for that purpose, shall be used to provide compensation and other forms of assistance to Member States which have suffered losses as described in paragraphs (b) and (c) of Article 52 of the Treaty, in such manner and to such extent as the Council may decide.

#### ARTICLE 11

##### Limitations on Operations:

1. The total amount outstanding of loans, equity investments and guarantees made by the Fund in its ordinary operations shall not at any time exceed such percentage of the total amount of its unimpaired subscribed capital, reserves and surplus included in its ordinary capital resources, excluding the Special Reserve and any other reserve not available for ordinary operation as the Board of Directors may regard as prudent.

2. The total amount outstanding in respect of the special operations of the Fund relating to any Special Facility shall not at any time exceed the total amount of the unimpaired special resources appertaining to that Special Facility.

3. In the case of funds invested in equity capital out of the ordinary capital resources of the Fund, the total amount invested shall not exceed such percentage of the aggregate amount of the unimpaired paid-up capital of the Fund together with the reserves and surplus included in its ordinary capital resources, excluding the Special Reserve as the Board of Directors may determine.

4. The amount of any equity investment in any entity or enterprise shall not exceed such percentage of the equity capital of that entity or enterprise as the Board of Directors shall in each specific case determine to be appropriate. The Fund shall not seek to obtain by such investment a controlling interest in the entity or enterprise concerned, except where necessary to safeguard the investment of the Fund.

5. In the case of guarantees given by the Fund in the course of its ordinary operations the total amount guaranteed shall not exceed 10 per cent of the aggregate amount of the unimpaired paid-up capital together with the reserves and surplus included in its ordinary capital resources excluding the Special Reserve.

#### ARTICLE 12

##### Provision of Currencies for Direct Loans:

In making direct loans or participating in them, the Fund may provide finance in the following ways:

(a) by furnishing the borrower with currencies other than the currency of the Member State in whose territory the project is located, which are needed by the borrower to meet the foreign exchange costs of the project; and/or

(b) by providing, when local currency required for the purposes of the loan cannot be raised by the borrower on reasonable terms, local currency but not exceeding a reasonable portion of the total local expenditure to be incurred by the borrower.

## ARTICLE 13

## Operating Principles:

Apart from the compensation or other form of assistance to a Member State as may be determined by the Council, or where it may be inappropriate to do so, the other operations of the Fund shall be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

(a) the Fund shall be guided by sound banking principles in its operations and shall not make loans or undertake any responsibility for the discharge or re-financing of earlier commitments by borrowers.

(b) in selecting projects, the Fund shall always be guided by the need to pursue the objectives set forth in Article 2 of this Protocol;

(c) subject to Article 2 of this Protocol, the Fund shall ensure that it shall so conduct its operations as not to impede the balanced economic development of all Member States;

(d) the operations of the Fund shall provide principally for the financing directly of specific projects within the Member States but may include loans to or guarantees of loans made to the national development agencies of the Member States so long as such loans or guarantees are in respect of and used for specific projects which are agreed to by the Fund;

(e) the Fund shall seek to maintain a reasonable diversification of its investments;

(f) the Fund shall seek to resolve its funds by selling its investments in equity capital to other investors wherever it can appropriately do so on satisfactory terms;

(g) the Fund shall not finance any undertaking in the territory of a Member State if that Member State objects to such financing;

(h) before a loan is granted or guaranteed or an investment made, the applicant shall have submitted an adequate proposal to the Fund, and the Managing Director shall have presented to the Board of Directors a written report regarding the proposal together with his recommendation;

(i) in considering an application for a loan or guarantee, the Fund shall pay due regard to the ability of the borrower to obtain finance or facilities elsewhere on terms and conditions that the Fund considers reasonable for the recipient, taking into account all pertinent factors;

(j) in making or guaranteeing a loan, the Fund shall pay due regard to the prospects that the borrower and its guarantor, if any, will be able to meet their obligations under the loan contract;

(k) in making or guaranteeing a loan, the rate of interest, other charges and the schedule for repayment of principal shall be such as are, in the opinion of the Fund, appropriate for the loan concerned;

(l) in guaranteeing a loan made by other investors, the Fund shall charge a suitable fee or commission for its risk;

(m) in the case of a direct loan made by the Fund, the borrower shall be permitted by the Fund to draw the loan funds only to meet payments in connection with the project as they fall due;

(n) the Fund shall take all necessary measures to ensure that the proceeds of any loan made, guaranteed or participated in by the Fund are used only for the purposes for which the loan was granted and with due attention to considerations of economy and efficiency;

(o) the Fund shall ensure that every loan contract entered into by it shall enable the Fund to exercise all necessary powers of entry, inspection and supervision of operations in connection with the project and shall further enable the Fund to require the borrower to provide information and to allow inspection of its books and records during such time as any part of the loan remains outstanding.

#### ARTICLE 14

##### Prohibition of Political Activities:

1. The Fund, its Managing Director and officers and staff shall not interfere in the political affairs of any Member States, nor shall they be influenced in their decisions by the political character of a Member State. Only economic considerations shall be relevant to their decisions and such considerations shall be weighed impartially to achieve and carry out the purposes and functions of the Fund.
2. The Fund shall not accept loans, Special Facilities or assistance that may in any way prejudice, limit, deflect or otherwise alter its purposes or functions.

#### ARTICLE 15

##### Terms and Conditions for Direct Loans and Guarantees:

1. In the case of direct loans made or participated in or loans guaranteed by the Fund, the contract shall establish in conformity with the operating principles set out above and subject to the other provisions of this Protocol the terms and conditions for the loan or the guarantee concerned, including payment of principal, interest, commitment fee and other charges, maturities, dates of payment in respect of the loan, or the fees and other charges in respect of the guarantee respectively and foreclosure.
2. The contract shall provide that all payments to the Fund under the contract shall be made in the currency loaned, unless, in the case of a loan made or guarantees as part of special operations, the regulations of the Fund provide otherwise.

3. Guarantees by the Fund shall also provide that the Fund may terminate its liability with respect to interest if, upon default by the borrower, or any other guarantor, the Fund offers to purchase, at par and interest accrued to a date designated in the offer, the loans or other obligations guaranteed.

4. Whenever it considers it appropriate, the Fund may require as a condition of granting or participating in a loan that the Member State in whose territory a project is to be carried out, or a public agency or institution of that Member State acceptable to the Fund, guarantees the repayment of the principal and the payment of interest and other charges on the loan in accordance with the terms thereof.

5. The loan or guarantee contract shall specifically state the currency in which all payments to the Fund thereunder shall be made.

#### ARTICLE 16

##### Commission and Fees:

1. In addition to interest, the Fund shall charge a commission on direct loans made or participated in as part of its ordinary operations at a rate to be determined by the Board of Directors and computed on the amount outstanding on each loan or participation.

2. In guaranteeing a loan as part of its ordinary operations, the Fund shall charge a guarantee fee at a rate determined by the Board of Directors payable periodically on the amount of the loan outstanding.

3. Other charges, including commitment fee, of the Fund in its ordinary operations and any commission, fees or other charges in relation to its special operations shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

#### ARTICLE 17

##### Special Reserve:

The amount of commissions and guarantee fees, and such amount of the interest as the Board of Directors may determine, received by the Fund under the provisions of Article 16 of this Protocol shall be set aside as a Special Reserve which shall be kept for meeting liabilities of the Fund in accordance with Article 18 of this Protocol and the administrative expenses of the Fund. This Special Reserve shall be held in such liquid form as the Board of Directors may decide.

#### ARTICLE 18

##### Defaults on Loans and Methods of Meeting Liabilities of the Fund:

1. In cases of default on loans made, participated in or guaranteed by the Fund in its ordinary operations, the Fund shall take such action as it considers appropriate to conserve its investment including modification of the terms of the loan, other than any term as to the currency of repayment.

2. Payments in discharge of the Fund's liabilities on borrowing or guarantees chargeable to the ordinary capital resources shall be charged firstly against the Special Reserve and then, to the extent necessary and at the discretion of the Fund, against other reserves, surplus and capital available to the Fund.

3. Whenever necessary to meet contractual payments of interest, other charges or amortization on borrowings of the Fund in its ordinary operations, or to meet its liabilities with respect to similar payments in relation to loans guaranteed by it, chargeable to its ordinary Resources, the Fund may in accordance with Article 7 of this Protocol, propose an increment in the resources of the Fund.

#### ARTICLE 19

##### Miscellaneous Powers:

In addition to the powers specified elsewhere in this Protocol, the Fund shall be empowered:

(a) to borrow funds in the territories of the Member States, or elsewhere, and in this connection to furnish such collateral or other security therefore as the Fund shall determine:

Provided that:

(i) before setting its obligations or otherwise borrowing in the territory of a country, the Fund shall obtain the approval of the Government of that country to the sale, and

(ii) before deciding to sell its obligations or otherwise borrowing in a particular country, the Fund shall consider the amount of previous borrowing, if any, in that country with a view to diversifying its borrowing to the maximum extent possible:

(b) to buy and sell securities which the Fund has issued or guaranteed their sale;

(c) to guarantee securities in which it has invested in order to facilitate their sale;

(d) to invest funds not immediately needed in its operations in such financial assets as it may determine and to invest funds held for pensions or similar purposes in marketable securities;

(e) to provide technical advice and assistance which may serve its purposes and come within its functions and where appropriate, for example, in the case of special feasibility studies, the Fund shall charge for such services;

(f) to study and promote the development and investment opportunities within the Member States.



## ARTICLE 20

## Power to make regulations:

The Board of Directors may make such regulations including financial regulations as it considers necessary or appropriate to further the purposes and functions of the Fund, provided that such regulations shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of this Protocol.

## ARTICLE 21

## Notice to be placed on securities

Every security issued or guaranteed by the Fund shall bear on its face a conspicuous statement to the effect that it is not an obligation of any Government, unless it is in fact the obligation of a particular Government, in which case it shall be so stated.

## ARTICLE 22

## Determination of convertibility:

Whenever it shall become necessary under this Protocol to determine whether any currency is convertible, the Fund shall submit recommendations to the Council which shall hold consultation with the International Monetary Fund.

## ARTICLE 23

## Use of currencies:

1. The Member States may not maintain or impose any restriction on the holding or use by the Fund or by any recipient from the Fund for payments in any country of the following:

- (a) Currencies received by the Fund in payment of contributions to its capital;
- (b) Currencies purchased with the currencies referred to in sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph;
- (c) Currencies obtained by the Fund by borrowing for inclusion in its ordinary capital resources; and
- (d) Currencies received by the Fund in payment of principal, interest, dividends or other charges in respect of loans or investments made out of any of the funds referred to in sub-paragraph (a), (b) and (c) of this paragraph or in payment of fees in respect of guarantees made by the Fund.

2. The Member States may not maintain or impose any restriction on the holding or use by the Fund or by any recipient from the Fund, for payments in any country, or currency received by the Fund which does not come within the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article unless such currency forms part of the Special Facilities of the Fund and its use is subject to special regulations.

3. The Member States may not maintain or impose any restriction on the holding or use by the Fund for making amortization payments or for repurchasing in whole or in part the Fund's own obligations, of currencies received by the Fund in repayment of direct loans made out of its ordinary capital resources.

4. Each Member State shall ensure, in respect of projects within its territories, that the currencies necessary to enable payments to be made to the Fund in accordance with the provisions of the contracts referred to in Article 15 of this Protocol shall be made available in exchange for currency of the Member State concerned.

#### ARTICLE 24

##### Organisation of the Fund:

The Fund shall have a Board of Directors, a Managing Director and other officers and staff as the Board of Directors may consider necessary.

#### ARTICLE 25

##### Board of Directors :

1. All the powers of the Fund shall, subject to the provisions of this Protocol be invested in the Board of Directors.

2. The Board of Directors shall consist of Ministers who are members of the Council appointed one each for that purpose by each Member State.

3. The Board of Directors shall elect in rotation according to an order to be determined by the Board of Directors, one of its members to be its Chairman who shall hold office for a term of one year.

4. When a Chairman ceases to be a member of the Board of Directors before the end of his term as Chairman the person appointed in his place shall become Chairman for the remainder of that term.

5. The appointment of a member of the Board of Directors may be revoked by the Member State which appointed him.

6. Each Member State shall appoint an alternate to its representative on the Board of Directors who shall be a person possessing high competence and wide experience in economic, financial and banking affairs.

7. The Authority may give directions of a general nature to the Board of Directors regarding the discharge of functions prescribed under this Protocol.

#### ARTICLE 26

##### Procedure of the Board of Directors:

1. The Board of Directors shall normally meet at the headquarters of the Fund but may meet at other places as the Board of Directors may decide. The Board of Directors shall meet at least every three months or more frequently if the business of the Fund so requires.

2. Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be convened by the Managing Director on the directions of the Chairman or at the request of two-thirds of the members of the Board of Directors.

3. Two-thirds of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for any meeting of the Board of Directors.

4. Subject to the provisions of this Protocol, the Board of Directors may determine its own procedure.

#### ARTICLE 27

##### Voting :

1. Each Member State on the Board of Directors shall have one vote.

2. All matters before the Board of Directors shall be decided by a simple majority.

#### ARTICLE 28

##### Managing Director of the Fund :

1. There shall be a Managing Director of the Fund who shall be appointed by the Council and who, while he remains Managing Director, may not hold office as a Director or an alternate to a Director but may attend and participate at meetings of the Board of Director without the right to vote.

2. Subject to the provisions of paragraphs 9 and 10 of Article 8 of the Treaty, the Managing Director shall be responsible for the day to day administration of the Fund.

3. The Executive Secretary shall attend meetings of the Board of Directors without the right to vote.

4. Subject to paragraph 5 of this Article, the Managing Director shall hold office for a term of four years and may be re-appointed for another term of four years only.

5. The Managing Director shall vacate his office if the Council after consultation with the Board of Directors so decides.

6. If the office of Managing Director becomes vacant for any reason, a successor shall be appointed by the Council for a new term of four years.

7. The Managing Director shall be the legal representative of the Fund.

8. The Managing Director shall be the Chief Executive of the Fund and shall conduct the current business of the Fund under the direction of the Board of Directors. He shall be responsible for the organisation, appointment and dismissal of the officers and staff in accordance with regulations made by the Board of Directors.

9. In appointing officers and staff the Managing Director shall, subject to the paramount importance of securing the highest standard of efficiency and technical competence, pay due regards to the recruitment of citizens of the Member States.

10. There shall be a Deputy Managing Director appointed and dismissed in the same manner as the Managing Director and he shall assist the Managing Director in the performance of his duties.

#### ARTICLE 29

##### Loyalties of Managing Director and officers and staff

The Managing Director and other officers and staff of the Fund, in the discharge of their duties owe their duty and loyalty to the Fund. Each Member State shall respect the international character of this duty and loyalty and shall refrain from all attempts to influence the Managing Director or any of the officers and staff in the discharge of their duties.

#### ARTICLE 30

##### Headquarters of the Fund :

The headquarters of the Fund shall be determined by the Authority. The Fund may establish offices or agencies elsewhere.

#### ARTICLE 31

##### Channel of communications, depositories:

1. Each Member State shall designate an appropriate official, entity or person with whom the Fund may communicate in connection with any matter arising under this Protocol.

2. Each Member State shall designate its Central Bank, or such other agency as may be agreed upon with the Fund, as a depository with which the Fund may keep its holdings of currency and other assets.

#### ARTICLE 32

##### Working languages

The working languages of the Fund shall be such African languages so designated by the Authority and English and French.

#### ARTICLE 33

##### Accounts and Reports

1. The Board of Directors shall ensure that proper accounts and proper records are kept in relation to the operations of the Fund and such accounts shall be audited in respect of each financial year by auditors of high repute appointed by the Council.

2. The Fund shall prepare and transmit to the Council and to the Member States through the Executive Secretary, and shall also publish an annual report containing an audited statement of its accounts.

3. The Fund shall prepare and transmit to Member States quarterly a summary statement of its financial position and a profit and loss statement showing the results of its operations.

4. All financial statements of the Fund shall show ordinary operations and the operations of each Special Facility separately.

5. The Fund may also publish such other reports as it considers desirable in carrying out its purposes and functions and such reports shall be transmitted to the Member States.

#### ARTICLE 34

##### Withdrawal

A Member State may not withdraw from the Fund except by withdrawing from the Community.

#### ARTICLE 35

##### Termination of Operations

1. The Authority may on the recommendation of the Council upon the proposal of the Board of Directors decide to terminate any of the operations of the Fund other than those in respect of the provision of compensation and other assistance to the Member States as prescribed in sub-paragraph 2 of Article 10 of this Protocol, and the Fund shall after such termination, forthwith, cease all activities in respect of any such operation except those incidental to the orderly realisation, conservation and preservation of its assets and the settlement of its obligations.

#### ARTICLE 36

##### Liabilities of Members and Payment of Claims

1. In the event of termination of the operations of the Fund, under the provisions of Article 35 of this Protocol, the liability of all Member States for their unpaid contributions to the capital of the Fund shall continue until all claims of creditors, including all contingent claims, shall have been discharged.

2. All creditors holding direct claims shall first be paid out of the assets of the Fund and then out of payments to the Fund of contributions not yet paid. Before making any payments to

## ARTICLE 37

## Status, Immunities and Privileges

1. The Fund is an international financial institution.
2. To enable the Fund effectively to fulfil its purposes and carry out the functions with which it is entrusted, the status, immunities, exemptions and privileges set forth in Article 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, and 44 of this Protocol shall be accorded to the Fund in the territories of each of the Member States.

## ARTICLE 38

## Legal Status

The Fund shall possess full juridical personality and, in particular, full capacity:

- (a) to contract;
- (b) to acquire, hold or dispose of, immovable and movable property; and
- (c) to institute legal proceedings.

## ARTICLE 39

## Judicial Proceedings

1. No action shall be brought against the Fund by Member States or persons acting for or deriving claims from Member States. Member States shall have recourse to such special procedures for the settlement of controversies between the Fund and its Members States as may be prescribed in this Protocol, in the regulations of the Fund or in contracts entered into with the Fund.
2. Action may be brought against the Fund in the territories of the Member States only in a court of competent jurisdiction in a Member State in which the Fund has an office, has appointed an agent for the purpose of accepting service or notice of process, or has issued or guaranteed securities.

## ARTICLE 40

## Immunity of Assets

The archives of the Fund and all documents belonging to it, or held by it, shall be inviolable wherever located.

## ARTICLE 41

## Freedom of Assets from Restrictions

To the extent necessary to carry out the purposes and functions of the Fund and subject to the provisions of this Protocol, all property and other assets of the Fund shall be free from restrictions, regulations, controls and moratoria of any nature.

## ARTICLE 42

## Personal Immunities and Privileges

The immunities and privileges will be those provided for under paragraph 4 of Article 60 of the Treaty.

## ARTICLE 43

## Exemption from Taxation

1. The Fund shall benefit from customs privileges usually granted to international organisations.
2. The Fund shall be exempted from income tax and all other taxes.

## ARTICLE 44

## Implementation

Each Member State shall promptly take such action as is necessary - to make effective within that Member State the privileges and immunities set forth in Articles 40, 41, 42, 43 and the other provisions of this Protocol and shall inform the Fund of the action which it has taken on the matter.

## ARTICLE 45

## Waiver of Immunities

1. The Fund at its discretion may waive any of the privileges, immunities and exemptions conferred under this Protocol in any case or instance, in such manner and upon such conditions as it may determine to be appropriate in the best interest of the Fund.
2. The Fund shall take every measure to ensure that the privileges, immunities, exemptions and facilities conferred by this Protocol are not abused and for this purpose shall establish such regulations as it may consider necessary and expedient.

## ARTICLE 46

## Interpretation and Application

Any question of interpretation and application of the provisions of this Protocol arising between any Member State and the Fund or between two or more Member States which cannot be settled in accordance with the provisions of Article 48 of this Protocol shall be submitted to the Tribunal of the Community for decision.

## ARTICLE 47

## Arbitration

Any disputes that may arise between any Member State and the Fund or between two or more Member States regarding the interpretation of this Protocol shall be amicably settled by direct agreement. In the event of failure to settle such disputes, the matter may be referred to the Tribunal of the Community by a party to such disputes and the decision of the Tribunal shall be final.

## ARTICLE 48

## Commencement of Operations

1. As soon as this Protocol has been ratified by the requisite number of Member States in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 49 of this Protocol the Directors shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Article 25 of this Protocol and the Managing Director of the Fund shall call the first meeting of the Board of Directors.

3. The Fund shall notify all Member States of the date of the commencement of its operations.

## ARTICLE 49

## Deposit and Entry into Force

1. This Protocol shall enter into force provisionally upon signature by Heads of State and Government of Member States and definitively upon ratification by at least seven Member States in accordance with the constitutional procedure applicable for each signatory State.

2. The Protocol and all the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Depository Government of the Treaty which shall transmit certified true copies of this Protocol to all Member States and notify them of the dates of deposits of the instruments of ratification and shall register this Protocol with the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations and such Organisations as the Council shall determine.

3. This Protocol shall be annexed to and shall form an integral part of the Treaty.

IN FAITH WHEREOF, WE, THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT  
IN WEST AFRICA, HAVE SIGNED THIS PROTOCOL.

DONE AT LOME this 5th day of November, 1976 in single original in the  
English and French languages, both being equally authentic.

.....  
H.E.Lt.Mathieu KEREKOU  
President of People's Republic  
of Benin

.....  
H.E.Mr.A.M.CAMARA  
Vice-President  
for and on behalf of the President  
of the Republic of Gambia



.....  
 Hon. Dr. K.A. GARDINER  
 Commissioner for Economic  
 Planning for and on behalf of  
 the Head of State and Chairman of  
 the National Redemption Council  
 of the Republic of Ghana.

.....  
 H.E. Moktar Ould DADDAH  
 President of the Islamic Republic  
 of Mauritania.

.....  
 H.E. Dr. Lansana BEAVOGUI  
 Prime Minister  
 for and on behalf of the Head of  
 State and Commander-in-Chief of  
 the People's Revolutionary Armed  
 Forces, President of the Republic  
 of Guinea

.....  
 H.E. Lt-Col. Seyni KOUNTCHE  
 Head of State and Chairman of the  
 Supreme Military Council of the  
 Republic of Niger

.....  
 H.E. Mr. Luiz CABRAL  
 President of the Republic of  
 Guinea-Bissau

.....  
 H.E. Lt. General Olusegun OBASANJO  
 Commander of the Federal Military  
 Government, Commander-in-Chief of  
 the Armed Forces of the Federal  
 Republic of Nigeria.

.....  
 H.E. Mr. Felix HOUPOUET-BOIGNY  
 President of the Republic of the  
 Ivory Coast

.....  
 H.E. Mr. Leopold Sedar SENGHOR  
 President of the Republic of Senegal

.....  
 H.E. Dr. William R. TOLBERT, Jr.  
 President of the Republic of  
 Liberia

.....  
 H.E. Dr. Siaka STEVENS  
 President of the Republic of  
 Sierra Leone

.....  
 Hon. Mr. FOUNEKE KETTA  
 Minister of Finance and Trade  
 for and on behalf of the Chairman  
 of the Military Committee of  
 National Liberation, President  
 of the Republic of Mali

.....  
 H.E. General Gnassingbe EYADEMA  
 President of the Togo Republic

.....  
 H.E. General A. Sangoule LAMIZANA  
 President of the Republic of Upper  
 Volta

PROTOCOL RELATING TO THE CONTRIBUTIONS  
BY MEMBER STATES TO THE BUDGET OF THE  
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES

## THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

Recalling the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 54 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States which require that the mode by which the contributions of Member States shall be determined and the currencies in which Member States shall pay their contributions to the Budget of the Economic Community of West African States shall be prescribed in a Protocol to the said Treaty:

AGREE AS FOLLOWS

## ARTICLE 1

## Definitions

In this Protocol:

"Treaty" means the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States.

"Community" means the Economic Community of West African States established by Article 1 of the Treaty.

"Commission" means the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and payments Commission of the Community established by sub-paragraph(s) of paragraph 1 of Article 9 of the Treaty.

## ARTICLE II

## The Budget of the Community

1. The revenue required to meet the budget of the Community for each financial year shall be met by the Member States of the Community in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article.
2. The contribution of each Member State in respect of the revenue referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be assessed on the basis of a co-efficient which takes into account the Gross Domestic Product and the Per Capita Income of all Member States. For this purpose, the co-efficient shall be calculated as one-half of the ratio of the Gross Domestic Product of each Member State to the total Gross Domestic Product of all Member States plus one-half of the ratio of the Per Capita Income of each Member State to the total Per Capita Income of all the Member States.

3. The statistics and other data on the Gross Domestic Product and the Per Capita Income of the Member States published by the United Nations shall be used in calculating the contribution of each Member State in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 of this Article.

4. The co-efficient for assessing the contribution of the Member States as determined in paragraph 2 of this Article shall be reviewed every three years by the Council of the recommendation of the Commission.

### ARTICLE III

#### Payment of Contributions

Contributions due from Member States of the Community under the provisions of Article II of this Protocol shall be paid into the budget of the Community within three months from the beginning of the financial year to which they relate.

### ARTICLE IV

#### Extraordinary Expenditure

1. Unless otherwise determined by the Council, the contributions of Member States of the Community to meet any extra-ordinary expenditure of the Community shall be on the basis of the same co-efficient as prescribed in Article II of this Protocol.

2. Contributions due from Member States of the Community under paragraph 1 of this Article shall be paid by such Member States within two months after they have been notified by the Executive Secretary of the Community that such contributions are due from them.

### ARTICLE V

#### Currencies for the Payment of Contributions

1. Unless otherwise decided by the Council, 100 per cent of any contribution due from a Member State of the Community under this Protocol shall be paid in convertible currency.

2. The unit of account in which the budget of the Community shall be prepared shall be the Special Drawing Rights of the International Monetary Fund.

3. For the purposes of this Article "convertible currency" shall be currency which is declared as such by the International Monetary Fund and such other currencies as the Council may from time to time designate.

4. The exchange value of the currencies of the Member States of the Community shall, for the purposes of the payment of contributions by them under the provisions of this Protocol, be the official declared rate to the International Monetary Fund on the date of payment. Where the currency of a Member State is floating the day's average of the selling and buying rates of the Central Bank of the Member State shall be used.

## ARTICLE VI

## Deposit and Entry into Force

1. This Protocol shall enter into force provisionally upon signature by Heads of State and Government of Member States and definitively upon ratification by at least seven Member States in accordance with the constitutional procedure applicable for each signatory State.
2. This Protocol and all the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Depository Government of the Treaty which shall transmit certified true copies of this Protocol to all Member States and notify them of the dates of deposits of the instruments of ratification and shall register this Protocol with the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations and such organisations as the Council shall determine.
3. This Protocol shall be annexed to and shall form an integral part of the Treaty.

IN FAITH WHEREOF, WE, THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN  
WEST AFRICA, HAVE SIGNED THIS PROTOCOL

DONE AT LOME this 5th day of November, 1976, in single original in the English  
and French languages, both texts being equally authentic.

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H.E. Lt.Mathieu KERKOU  
President of People's Republic  
of Benin

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Hon.Dr.K.A.GARDINER  
Commissioner for Economic Planning  
for and on behalf of the Head of State  
and Chairman of the National Redemption  
Council of the Republic of Ghana

.....  
H.E.Mr.A.M. CAMARA  
Vice-President  
for and on behalf of the President  
of the Republic of Gambia

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H.E.Moktar Ould DABDAH  
President of the Islamic Republic  
of Mauritania

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DONE AT LOME this 5th day of November, 1976, in single original in the  
English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic.

GENERAL CONVENTION ON PRIVILEGES AND  
IMMUNITIES OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY  
OF WEST AFRICAN STATES

## ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES

Whereas paragraph 2 of Article 60 of the Treaty establishing the ECOWAS, hereinafter referred to as "the Treaty", provides that the Community shall have in the territory of each Member State the legal capacity required for the performance of its functions;

Whereas paragraph 4 of Article 60 of the Treaty provides that the privileges and immunities to be granted to the officials of the Community and in Member States shall be the same as are accorded to diplomatic persons at the Headquarters of the Community and in the Member States. Similarly, the privileges and immunities granted to the Secretariat at the Headquarters of the Community shall be the same as granted to the diplomatic missions at the Headquarters of the Community and in the Member States; and

Whereas Article 42 of the Protocol relating to the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development, hereinafter referred to as the "Fund" provides that the immunities and privileges to be granted to the officials of the FUND shall be those provided for under paragraph 4 of Article 60 of the Treaty.

Consequently, the High Contracting Parties have adopted the following Convention.

## ARTICLE 1

## Definitions:

In this Convention, the following expressions shall have the meanings assigned to them hereunder:

- (a) The "Treaty" means the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States;
- (b) The "Community" means the Economic Community of West African States and it includes the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development and all other institutions as defined in Article 4 of the Treaty;
- (c) "Fund" means the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development as established under Article 50 of the Treaty;
- (d) "Community Officials" means an Official entitled to the privileges and immunities stated in this Convention;
- (e) "Member State" or "Member States" means a Member State or Member States of the Community;
- (f) "Council" means the Council of Ministers established by Article 6 of the Treaty.



## ARTICLE 2

## Juridical Personality

The Community shall possess juridical personality. It shall have the capacity:

- (a) to contract;
- (b) to acquire and dispose of immovable and movable property;
- (c) to institute legal proceedings.

## ARTICLE 3

## Property, Funds &amp; Assets

1. The Community, its premises, buildings, assets and other property wherever located and by whomsoever held, shall enjoy immunity for every form of legal process except in so far as in any particular case it has expressly waived its immunity. It is, however, understood that no waiver of immunity shall extend to any measure of execution. Provided that actions may be brought against the Fund as provided in paragraph 2 of Article 39 of the Protocol relating to the Fund.
2. Subject to the provisions of Article 41 of the Protocol relating to the Fund, the premises and buildings of the Community shall be inviolable. The property and assets of the Community, wherever located and by whomsoever held, shall be immune from search, requisition, confiscation, expropriation and from any other form of interference whether by executive, administrative, judicial or legislative action.
3. The archives of the Community and in general all documents belonging to it or held by it shall be inviolable wherever located.
4. Without being restricted by financial controls, regulations or moratoria of any kind;
  - (a) the Community may hold funds, gold or currency of any kind and operate account in any currency;
  - (b) the Community shall be free to transfer its funds, gold or currency from one country to the other, or within any country and to convert any currency held by it into any other currency.
5. It is provided however, that in exercising its rights under paragraph 4 above, the Community shall pay due regard to any representations made by the Government of any Member State in so far as it is considered that effect can be given to such representations without detriment to the interests of the Community.

## ARTICLE 4

## Tax Exemption

1. The Community, its income, assets and properties shall be exempt:
  - (a) from all direct taxes, except that the ECOWAS will not claim exemption from taxes or dues which are no more than charges for public utility services;
  - (b) from all import and export duties, prohibitions and restrictions on imports and exports in respect of articles imported or exported by the Community for its official purposes. It is provided, however, that articles imported under such exemptions shall not be sold or otherwise disposed of in the country into which they were imported except under conditions agreed upon by the appropriate authorities of the Government of that country.
  - (c) from customs duties, prohibitions and restrictions of import and exports in respect of its publications.
2. The Community shall be exempt from excise duties and from taxes which are payable on the purchase of moveable and immoveable property which form part of the price to be paid. Member States shall make appropriate administrative arrangements for the remission or refund of the amount of duty or tax if such duty or tax has been charged.

## ARTICLE 5

## Facilities in Respect of Communications.

1. The Community shall enjoy in the territory of each Member for its official correspondence treatment not less favourable than that accorded by the Government of that Member to any other international organisation as well as any Government, including its diplomatic mission in the matters of priorities, rates and taxes on mails, cables, telegrams, radiograms, telephotos, telephone and other communications, as well as press rates for information to the press and radio. All official correspondence and other official communications of the Community shall not be subject to censorship.
2. The Community shall have the right to use codes and to despatch and receive its official correspondence either by courier or in sealed bags which shall have the same immunities and privileges as diplomatic couriers and bags.

## ARTICLE 6

## Representatives of Member States

1. Representatives of Member States to the institutions as well as to the Technical and Specialised Commissions of the Community and to conferences convened by the Community, shall, while exercising their functions, and during their travel to and from the place of meeting, enjoy the following privileges and immunities:

- (a) Immunity from personal arrest or detention and from any official interrogation as well as from inspection or seizure of their personal baggage;
- (b) Immunity from legal process of every kind in respect of words spoken, written or acts done by them in the exercise of their functions;
- (c) Inviolability for all their papers and documents and the right to use codes and to receive papers or correspondence by courier or in sealed bags;
- (d) Exemption in respect of themselves and their spouses from immigration restrictions, aliens' registration and from national obligations in the state they are visiting or through which they are passing in the exercise of their functions;
- (e) The same facilities in respect of currency or exchange restrictions as are accorded to representatives of foreign governments on temporary official missions;
- (f) The same immunities and facilities in respect of their personal and official baggage as are accorded to diplomatic envoys.
- (g) Such other privileges, immunities and facilities not inconsistent with the foregoing as diplomatic envoys enjoy, except that they shall have no right to claim exemption from customs duties on goods, imported (otherwise than as part of their personal baggage) or from excise duties or sales taxes.

2. In order to secure, for the representation of Member States to the institutions as well as to the Technical and Specialised Commissions of the Community and to conferences convened by the Community, complete freedom of speech and independence in the discharge of their duties, the immunity from legal process in respect of words spoken or written and all acts done by them in discharging their duties shall continue to be accorded, notwithstanding that the persons concerned are no longer the representatives of Member States.

3. Where the incidence of any form of taxation depends upon residence periods during which the representatives of Member States to the institutions as well as to the Technical and Specialised Commissions of the Community and to conferences convened by the Community, are present in a state for the discharge of their duties, shall not be considered as periods of residence.

4. Privileges and immunities are recorded to the Representatives of Member States not for personal benefit of the individuals themselves but in order to safeguard the independent exercise of their functions in connection with the Community. Consequently, a Member State not only has the right but is under a duty to waive the immunity of its representative in any case where in the opinion of the Member State, the immunity of its representative in any case where in the opinion of the Member State, and it can be waived without prejudice to the purpose for which the immunity is accorded.

5. The provisions of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of this Article are not applicable as between a representative and the authorities of the state of which he is a national or of which he is or has been the representative.

6. In this Article, the expression "representative" shall be deemed to include all delegates, advisers, technical experts and secretaries of delegations.

## ARTICLE 7

### Officials of the Community.

1. The Executive Secretary shall specify the categories of officials to which the provisions of this Article and Article 8 shall apply. He shall submit these categories to the Council for approval. Thereafter, these categories shall be communicated to the Government of all Member States. The names of the officials included in these categories shall from time to time be made known to the Governments of Member States.

2. Community Officials have the same privileges and immunities as diplomatic persons at the headquarters of the Community and at the headquarters of the Fund as well as in all Member States. Consequently, Member States undertake to give the same recognition and facilities to the Executive Secretary of the Executive Secretariat and the Managing Director of the Fund as are given to Heads of Diplomatic Missions.

3. In keeping with paragraph 2 of this Article, Community officials particularly have the following privileges and immunities:

- (a) the person of the Community official is inviolable. He shall not be liable to arrest and detention, and Member States shall treat him with due respect and shall take all appropriate steps to prevent any attack on his personal freedom or dignity.
- (b) the private residence of the Community official enjoys the same inviolability and protection as the premises of the headquarters of the Community. His papers, correspondence, and except as provided in paragraphs 3(k) of this Article his property shall likewise enjoy inviolability.
- (c) the Community official shall enjoy immunity from criminal jurisdiction in all the Member States. He shall also enjoy immunity from civil and administrative jurisdiction in all the Member States, except in the case of:

- (i) a real action relating to private immovable property situated in the territory of a Member State, unless he holds it on behalf of the Community for the purposes of the Executive Secretariat of the Fund or any other institution of the Community.
- (ii) an action relating to succession in which the official is involved as executor, administrator, heir or legatee as a private person and not on behalf of the Community or any of its institutions.
- (iii) an action relating to any professional or commercial activity exercised by the official in the Member State outside his official functions.
- (d) No measures of execution may be taken in respect of a Community official except in the cases coming under sub-paragraphs 3(c) (i), (ii) and (iii) of Article 7, and provided that the measures concerned can be taken without infringing the inviolability of his person or of his residence.
- (e) The Community official shall not be obliged to give evidence as a witness in any legal proceedings.
- (f) He shall be exempt from taxation on the salaries and emoluments paid to him by the Community.
- (g) He shall be immune from national service obligations.
- (h) He shall be immune together with his spouse and relatives residing with and dependent on him from immigration restrictions and alien registration.
- (i) The immunity of a Community official may be waived by the Executive Secretary on behalf of the Community.
- (j) The initiation of proceedings by a Community official shall preclude him from invoking immunity from jurisdiction in respect of any counter-claim directly connected with the principal claim.
- (k) Waiver of immunity from jurisdiction in respect of civil or administrative proceedings shall not be held to imply waiver of immunity in respect of the execution of the judgement, for which a separate waiver shall be necessary.

4. Community Officials are members of Staff of the Community entitled to privileges and immunities. They shall be the professional international civil servants as defined in the Staff Rules and Regulations of the Community, and such other persons as the Executive Secretary may designate from time to time.

## ARTICLE 8

### Experts on Mission for the Community

1. Experts (other than officials coming within the scope of Article 7 performing missions for the Community) shall be accorded such privileges and immunities as are necessary for the independent exercise of their functions during the period of their missions, including the time spent on journeys in connection with their missions. In particular, they shall be accorded:

- (a) immunity from personal arrest or detention as well as any official interrogation and from inspection or seizure of their personal baggage except where he is caught in the actual commission of an offence and the member state concerned shall immediately inform the Executive Secretary.
- (b) in respect of words spoken or written and acts done by them in the course of the performance of their mission, immunity from legal process shall continue to be accorded notwithstanding that the persons concerned are no longer employed on missions for the Community.
- (c) inviolability for all official correspondence.
- (d) the same facilities in respect of exchange restrictions as are accorded to representatives of foreign governments on temporary official missions.

2. Privileges and immunities are granted to experts in the interests of the Community and not for the personal benefit of the individuals themselves. The Executive Secretary shall have the right and the duty to waive the immunity of any expert in any case where, in his opinion, the immunity would impede the course of justice and it can be waived without prejudice to the interests of the Community.

## ARTICLE 9

### Community Laissez-Passer

- 1. The Community may issue Community Laissez-Passer to its officials. The Laissez-Passer shall be recognised and accepted as valid travel document by the authorities of Member States.
- 2. The Community may conclude agreements for this Laissez-passer to be recognised as valid travel documents within the territories of the Member States of the OAU and within the territories of other countries.

## ARTICLE 10

### Settlement of Disputes

All disputes that may arise between the Community on the one hand and a Member State on the other hand, regarding the interpretation or application of this Convention shall be referred to the Tribunal of the Community as established by Article 11(I) of the Treaty and the decision of the Tribunal shall be final.

## ARTICLE 11

1. This Convention shall enter into force provisionally upon the signature of Heads of State and Government and definitively upon ratification by at least seven (7) signatory states in accordance with the constitutional procedures applicable for each signatory State.
2. This present Convention shall be subject to ratification and the instrument of ratification shall be deposited with the Executive Secretary.
3. Any member State may accede to this Convention and the Instrument of accession shall be deposited with the Executive Secretary.

IN FAITH, WHEREOF, WE THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES, HAVE SIGNED THIS CONVENTION.

DONE at Lagos this 22nd of April 1978 in single original in the English and French languages both texts being equally authentic.

.....

H.E. Colonal Mathieu KEREKOU  
President of the Republic of Benin

.....

H.E. Alhaji Sir Dauda K.  
JAWARA  
President of the Republic of  
Gambia

.....

H.E. Mr. Aristides PEREIRA  
President of the Republic of  
Cape Verde

.....

H.E. Major General George Yaw  
BPALU  
for and on behalf of the  
Head of State and Chairman  
of the Supreme Military  
Council of the Republic of  
Ghana

.....

Mr. Ismael TOURE  
Minister of the Economy and Finance  
for and on behalf of the Head of State  
and Commander-in-Chief of the People's  
Revolutionary Armed Forces of the  
Republic of Guinea  
President Ahmed Sekou TOURE

.....

Intendant Militaire Moussa  
TONDI  
Minister of Finance for and  
on behalf of the Supreme  
Military Council of the  
Republic of Niger

PROTOCOL OF NON-AGGRESSION



## THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

CONSIDERING that the Economic Community of West African States, (hereinafter referring to as the "Community"), set up by virtue of the Treaty of May 28, 1975, cannot attain its objectives save in an atmosphere of peace and harmonious understanding among the Member States of the Community.

RECALLING Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter which provides that all Member States shall refrain, in their international relations, from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or independence of any State, or any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

RECALLING Article 3(3) of the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity which provides for the respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and its inalienable right to independent existence;

RECALLING the Resolution of the Summit Meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Community held in Lome on 5 November, 1976, regarding the signing of an Annexed Protocol on non-recourse to force by Member States of the Community:

AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

## ARTICLE 1

Member States shall, in their relations with one another, refrain from the threat or use of force or aggression or from employing any other means inconsistent with the Charters of the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity against the territorial integrity of political independence of other Member States.

## ARTICLE 2

Each Member State shall refrain from committing, encouraging or condoning acts of subversion, hostility or aggression against the territorial integrity or political independence of the other Member States.

## ARTICLE 3

Each Member State shall undertake to prevent Foreigners resident on its territory from committing the acts referred to in Article 2 above against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other Member States.

## ARTICLE 4

Each Member State shall undertake to prevent non-resident Foreigners from using its territory as a base for committing the acts referred to in Article 2 above against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member-States

## ARTICLE 5

1. Member States pledge to resort to all peaceful means in the settlement of disputes arising among themselves.

2. Any dispute which cannot be settled peacefully among Member States shall be referred to a Committee of the Authority. In the event of failure of settlement by the aforementioned Committee the dispute shall finally go to the Authority.

3. The composition and the mandate of the Committee referred to in the preceding paragraph shall be decided upon by the Authority.

## ARTICLE 6

- (1) This Protocol shall come into effect provisionally on signature by the Heads of State and Government, and definitely on ratification by at least seven signature States, in conformity with the constitutional regulations of each Member State.
- (2) This Protocol, as well as all the instruments of Ratification, shall be deposited with the Executive Secretariat who shall transmit certified true copies of this Protocol to all Member States informing them of the dates on which the Instruments of Ratification have been deposited. The Protocol shall be registered with the Organisations approved by the Authority.
- (3) Any Member State may accede to this Protocol and the instrument of accession shall be deposited with the Executive Secretariat.
- (4) This Protocol shall be annexed to and form an integral part of the Treaty.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, WE, THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT  
IN THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES HAVE SIGNED THIS PROTOCOL

DONE at Lagos this 22nd of April 1978 in single original in the English  
and French languages both texts being equally authentic.

PROTOCOL RELATING TO FREE MOVEMENT OF  
PERSONS, RESIDENCE AND ESTABLISHMENT

## THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

RECALLING that sub-paragraph (d) of paragraph 2 of Article 2 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States calls on Member States to ensure by stages the abolition of the obstacles to free movement of persons, services and capital.

RECALLING also that paragraph 1 of Article 27 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States confers the status of Community citizenship on the citizens of Member States, and also enjoins Member States to abolish all obstacles to freedom of movement and residence within the Community.

RECALLING further that paragraph 2 of Article 27 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States further calls on Member States to exempt Community citizens from holding visitor's visa and residence permits and allow them to work and undertake commercial and industrial activities within their territories.

CONVINCED of the need to spell out in this Protocol the various stages to be undergone to accomplish complete freedom of movement as envisaged by sub-paragraph (d) of paragraph 2 of Article 2 and Article 27 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States:

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

## PART II

## Definition

## ARTICLE 1

In this Protocol:

"Treaty" means the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States.

"Council of Ministers" means the Council of Ministers established by Article 6 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States.

"Executive Secretary" means the Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States.

"Commission" means the Trade, Customs, Immigration, Monetary and Payments Commission established by Article 9 of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States.

"Community" means the Economic Community of West African States.

"Member State" or Member States" means a Member State or Member States of the Economic Community of West African States.

"A citizen of the Community" means a citizen of any Member State,

"A valid travel document" means a passport or any other valid travel document establishing the identify of the holder with his photograph, issued by or on behalf of the Member State of which he is a citizen and on which endorsement by immigration and emigration authorities may be made. A valid travel document shall also include a laissez-passer issued by the Community to its officials establishing the identify of the holder.

## PART II

### General Principles on Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment

#### ARTICLE 2

1. The Community citizens have the right to enter, reside and establish in the territory of Member States.

2. The right of entry, residence and establishment referred to in paragraph 1 above shall be progressively established in the course of a maximum transitional period of fifteen (15) years from the definitive entry into force of this Protocol by abolishing all other obstacles to free movement of persons and to the right of residence and establishment.

3. The right of entry, residence and establishment which shall be established in the course of a transitional period shall be accomplished in three phases, namely:

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Phase I   | - Right of Entry and Abolition of Visas |
| Phase II  | - Right of Residence                    |
| Phase III | - Right of Establishment                |

4. Upon the expiration of a maximum period of five (5) years from the definitive entry into force of this Protocol the Commission, based upon the experience gained from the implementation of the first phase as set out in Article 3 below, shall make proposals to the Council of Ministers for further liberalization towards the subsequent phases of freedom of residence and establishment of persons within the Community and these phases shall be dealt with in subsequent Annexes to this Protocol.

## PART III

Implementation of the First Phase : Abolition of Visas  
and Entry Permit

## ARTICLE 3

1. Any citizen of the Community who wishes to enter the territory of any other Member States shall be required to possess valid travel document and international health certificate.
2. A citizen of the Community visiting any Member State for a period not exceeding ninety (90) days shall enter the territory of the Member State through the official entry point free of visa requirements. Such citizen shall, however, be required to obtain permission for an extension of stay from the appropriate authority if after such entry that citizen has cause to stay for more than ninety (90) days.

## ARTICLE 4

Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 above, Member States shall reserve the right to refuse admission into their territory any Community citizen who comes within the category of inadmissible immigrants under its laws.

## PART IV

Movement of Vehicles for the Transportation of  
Persons

## ARTICLE 5

In order to facilitate the movement of persons transported in private or commercial vehicles the following provisions shall apply:-

## 1. Private Vehicles.

A private vehicle registered in the territory of a Member State may enter the territory of another Member State and remain there for a period of ninety (90) days upon presentation of the documents listed hereunder to the competent authority of that Member State:-

- (i) Valid driving licence.
- (ii) Matriculation Certificate (Ownership Card) or Log Book.
- (iii) Insurance Policy recognised by Member States.
- (iv) International Customs carnet recognised within the Community.

## 2. Commercial Vehicles.

A commercial vehicle registered in the territory of a Member State and carrying passengers may enter the territory of another Member State and remain there for a period not exceeding fifteen (15) days upon presentation of the documents listed hereunder to the competent authority of that Member State:-

- (i) Valid driving licence.
- (ii) Matriculation Certificate (Ownership Card) or Log Book.
- (iii) Insurance Policy recognised by Member States.
- (iv) International customs carnet recognised within the Community.

During the period of fifteen (15) days the commercial motor vehicle shall however not engage in any commercial activities within the territory of the Member State entered.

## PART V

### Miscellaneous Provisions

#### ARTICLE 6

Each Member State shall deposit at the Executive Secretariat specimen of travel documents defined in Article 1 in the present Protocol with a view to communicating them to all Member States.

#### ARTICLE 7

Any dispute that may arise among Member States regarding the interpretation or application of this Protocol shall be amicably settled by direct agreement. In the event of failure to settle such disputes, the matter may be referred to the Tribunal of the Community by a party to such disputes and the decision of the Tribunal shall be final.

#### ARTICLE 8

Any dispute that may arise among Member States regarding the interpretation or application of this Protocol shall be amicably settled by direct agreement, in the event of failure to settle such disputes, the matter may be referred to the Tribunal of the Community by a party to such disputes and the decision of the Tribunal shall be final.

## ARTICLE 8

1. Any Member State may submit proposals for the amendment or revision of this Protocol.

2. Any such proposals shall be submitted to the Executive Secretary who shall communicate them to other Member States not later than thirty days after the receipt of such proposal. Amendments or revisions shall be considered by the Council of Ministers after Member States have been given one month's notice thereof.

## ARTICLE 9

Member States undertake to cooperate among themselves by exchanging information on such matters that are likely to affect the effective implementation of this Protocol. Such information will also be sent to the Executive Secretary for necessary action in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty.

## ARTICLE 10

The provisions of this Protocol shall not operate to the prejudice of citizens of the Community who are already in residence and establishment in a Member State provided they comply with the laws in general and in particular the immigration laws of that Member State.

## ARTICLE 11

1. A decision to expel any citizen of the Community from the territory of a Member State shall be notified to the citizen concerned as well as the government of which he is a citizen and the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS.

2. The expenses incurred in the expulsion of a citizen shall be borne by the Member State which expels him.

3. In case of expulsion the security of the citizen concerned as well as that of his family shall be guaranteed and his property protected and returned to him without prejudice to his obligations to third party.

4. In case of repatriation of a citizen of the Community from the territory of a Member State, the Member State shall notify the government of the state of origin of the citizen and the Executive Secretary.

5. The cost of repatriation of a citizen of the Community from the territory of a Member State shall be borne by the citizen himself or in the event that he is unable to do so by the country of which he is a citizen.



## ARTICLE 12

The provisions of the present Protocol shall not affect more favourable provisions contained in agreements that have already been concluded between two or among several Member States.

## PART VI

## Final Provisions : Deposit and Entry into Force

## ARTICLE 13

1. This Protocol shall enter into force provisionally upon signature by Heads of State and Government of Member States and definitely upon ratification by at least seven signatory States in accordance with the constitutional procedures applicable for each signatory state.
2. This Protocol and all the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Executive Secretariat which shall transmit certified true copies of this Protocol to all Member States and notify them of the dates of deposits of the instruments of ratification and shall register this Protocol with the Organisations as the Council shall determine.
3. This Protocol shall be annexed to and shall form an integral part of the Treaty.

IN FAITH WHEREOF, WE THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF  
THE COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES HAVE SIGNED THIS PROTOCOL.

DONE at Dakar this 29th Day of May 1979 in single original in the  
English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic.

SUPPLEMENTARY PROTOCOL OF RECTIFICATION OF THE  
FRENCH TEXT OF THE PROTOCOL RELATING TO THE  
DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF PRODUCTS ORIGINATING  
FROM MEMBER STATES OF ECOWAS

## THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

CONSIDERING that certain rectification should be made to the French text of the Protocol relating to the definition of the concept of products originating from Member States and ECOWAS signed at Lome on the 5th day of November 1976.

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

## ARTICLE 1

## Definition

The last paragraph of Article 1 of the French text of the Protocol relating to the definition of the concept of products originating from Member States of ECOWAS and especially defining "Value-added" is rectified below to agree with the English text.

"Value-added" means the difference between ex-factory price of the finished product including subsidies if any, less local taxes and duties, and the c.i.f. value of the material imported from third countries and used in the production.

## ARTICLE 11

## Deposit and Entry into Force

1. This Supplementary Protocol and rectification shall enter into force upon signature by Heads of State and Government of Member States and definitively upon ratification by at least seven signatory states in accordance with the constitutional procedures applicable for each signatory state.
2. This Supplementary Protocol and all instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Executive Secretariat which shall transmit certified true copies of this Supplementary Protocol to all Member States and shall register this Supplementary Protocol with the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations and such organisations as the Council determine.
3. This Supplementary Protocol shall be annexed to and shall form an integral part of the Treaty.

IN FAITH THEREOF, WE THE HEADS OF STATES AND GOVERNMENT OF THE THE COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES HAVE SIGNED THIS SUPPLEMENTARY PROTOCOL.

DONE at Dakar this 29th day of May, 1979, in single original in the English and French languages both texts being equally authentic.

SUPPLEMENTARY PROTOCOL AMENDING PROTOCOL  
RELATING TO THE DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF  
PRODUCTS ORIGINATING FROM MEMBER STATES

## THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

CONSIDERING the Protocol relating to the definition of products originating from Member States and especially Article II of the Protocol.

CONVINCED that the concept of ex-factory price before tax derives from the manufacturing process and is therefore a more appropriate factor to be used as the basis for the determination of the contributions of the resources from the Community to the value of a finished product than the concept of FOB price.

DESIRING to conclude a supplementary Protocol amending the Protocol relating to the definition of products originating from Member States.

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

## ARTICLE 1

## Rules of Origin of Community Goods.

- (i) Article II(i)(c) of the Protocol is hereby amended to read as follows:

"If the goods have been produced from material of a foreign or undetermined origin and having received in the process of production a value added of at least 35% of the ex-factory price before tax on the finished product; and"

- (ii) Article II (3) of the Protocol is amended to read as follows:

"Any conditions of acceptance of goods originating in Member States for Community trade may be reviewed periodically by the Council who shall determine the elements that constitute the ex-factory price before tax of a finished product and those that constitute value added."

## ARTICLE II

## Deposit and Entry into Force

1. This Supplementary Protocol shall enter into force provisionally upon signature by Heads of State and Government of Member States and definitively upon ratification by at least seven signatory States in accordance with the constitutional procedures applicable for each signatory State.

2. This Supplementary Protocol and all instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Executive Secretariat which shall transmit true copies of this supplementary Protocol to all Member States and notify them of the dates of deposits of the instruments of ratification and shall register this supplementary Protocol with the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations and such organisations as the Council shall determine.

3. This Supplementary Protocol shall be annexed to and shall form an integral part of the Treaty.

IN FAITH WHEREOF WE THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES HAVE SIGNED THIS SUPPLEMENTARY PROTOCOL.

DONE at Dakar this 29th day of May, 1979, in single original in the English and French languages both texts being equally authentic.

Signed  
.....  
H.E. Colonel Mathieu KEREKOU  
President of People's Republic of  
Benin

Signed  
.....  
H.E. Mr. Aristides PEREIRA  
President of the Republic of  
Cape Verde

Signed  
.....  
H.E. General Frederick William  
Kwasi AKUFFO  
The Head of State and Chairman  
of the Supreme Military Council  
of the Republic of Ghana

Signed  
.....  
H.E. Dr. Lansana BEAVOGUI  
Prime Minister  
For and on behalf of the Head of  
State and Commander-in-Chief of  
the People's Revolutionary Armed  
Forces. President of the People's  
Revolutionary Republic of Guinea

Signed  
.....  
H.E. Mr. Felix HOUPOUET-BOIGNY  
President of the Republic of  
the Ivory Coast.

Signed  
.....  
H.E. Alhaji Sir Dauda K. JAWARA  
President of the Republic of  
Gambia

Signed  
.....  
H.E. Mr. Moulaye MOHAMED  
Minister of Finance and Commerce  
for and on behalf of the Chairman  
of the Military Committee of  
National Redemption of the  
Islamic Republic of Mauritania

Signed  
.....  
H.E. Lt. Col. Seyni LOUNTICHE  
Head of State and Chairman of the  
Supreme Military Council of the  
Republic of Niger

Signed  
.....

H.E. Mr. Luiz CABRAL  
President of the Republic  
of Guinea-Bissau

Signed  
.....

H.E. General A. Sangoule LAMIZANA  
President of the Republic of  
Upper Volta

Signed  
.....

H.E. Dr. William R. TOLBERT, Jr.  
President of the Republic of  
Liberia

Signed  
.....

H.E. General Moussa TRAORE  
Chairman of the Military Committee  
of National Liberation  
President of the Republic of Mali

Signed  
.....

H.E. General Olusegun OBASANJO  
Head of the Federal Military Government  
Commander-in-Chief of the Armed  
Forces of the Republic of Nigeria.

Signed  
.....

H.E. Mr. Leopold Sedar SENGHOR  
President of the Republic of Senegal

Signed  
.....

H.E. Dr. Siaka STEVENS  
President of the Republic of Sierra  
Leone

.....

H.E. General Gnassingbe EYADEMA  
President of the Republic of Togo.